Index Astartes
First Founding

An in-depth look at the First Founding Legions of the Adeptus Astartes

HAND OF JUSTICE

The Iron Hands Space Marine Chapter

by Anthony Reynolds

The Iron Hands have been unforgiving devotees to the Emperor's word since the time of legends, when the god-like Primarchs walked among men. Through countless centuries the Iron Hands have remained unwavering in their faith and belief. They have endured dark years of suffering and pain, where others have faltered and been forgotten by time. They look with disgust on those who lack their strength of will and punish them without remorse. Their Primarch, Ferrus Manus, is seen as a strong and unwavering warrior-god, the savior of his people, who will return one day to lead all of humanity from the darkness that besets it from all sides and from within.

Origins:

At the very dawn of the Imperium, a time of great deeds and mighty battles, Ferrus Manus broke the darkness of the world of Medusa and became the shining light of its people. The sky, perpetually darkened by a great calamity of the long gone ancients, was ripped asunder as Ferrus descended from the heavens amid a great inferno of light. Never before had the primitive human clans of Medusa seen such light, and they were awed and frightened by the fiery display that burned their eyes. The great star crashed into the highest mountain of Medusa, Karaashi, the Ice Pinnacle. The impact shattered the mountain top, burying Ferrus deep in the ice in a tremendous explosion of steam. The land shook under the impact which could be felt the world over. Mountains were toppled, and great chasms were formed as the world rumbled under the coming of the great Primarch.

Years later, the great warrior-god Ferrus walked unscathed and fully formed from the uninhabited mountain ranges of the far northern wastes where the Ice Pinnacle lies. The legends of the roaming clans, taught from father to son throughout the ages, revolve around the early exploits of Ferrus, tales of fantastic acts of strength and endurance. No one could match his strength of arm, try as he might to find a worthy opponent. He sought out every physical challenge that he could, always returning victorious. According to one often recounted mythic tale, he once challenged a Storm Giant to a competition of strength. The giant lifted a mountain between his hands and set it back down a mile away. The giant's laugh died as Ferrus lifted the entire mountain range onto his back, carrying it to a neighboring island. The humbled giant was never seen again.

Ferrus travelled the length and breadth of Medusa, becoming well known by all its people and coming to know the land itself as no one ever had. He traveled areas that any other man would have found inaccessible. He climbed the highest mountains, he swam the deepest oceans – always pushing himself and his body, pushing his levels of endurance and strength to unfathomable levels. His strength and fury made him renowned and feared amongst the people of the clans, who valued such qualities highly, and he was uniformly adopted by them as one of their own. He never sought to end the conflicts between the clans, seeing such competition as healthy and strengthening. He always remained neutral, never participating in their feuds so as not to favor one clan over another.

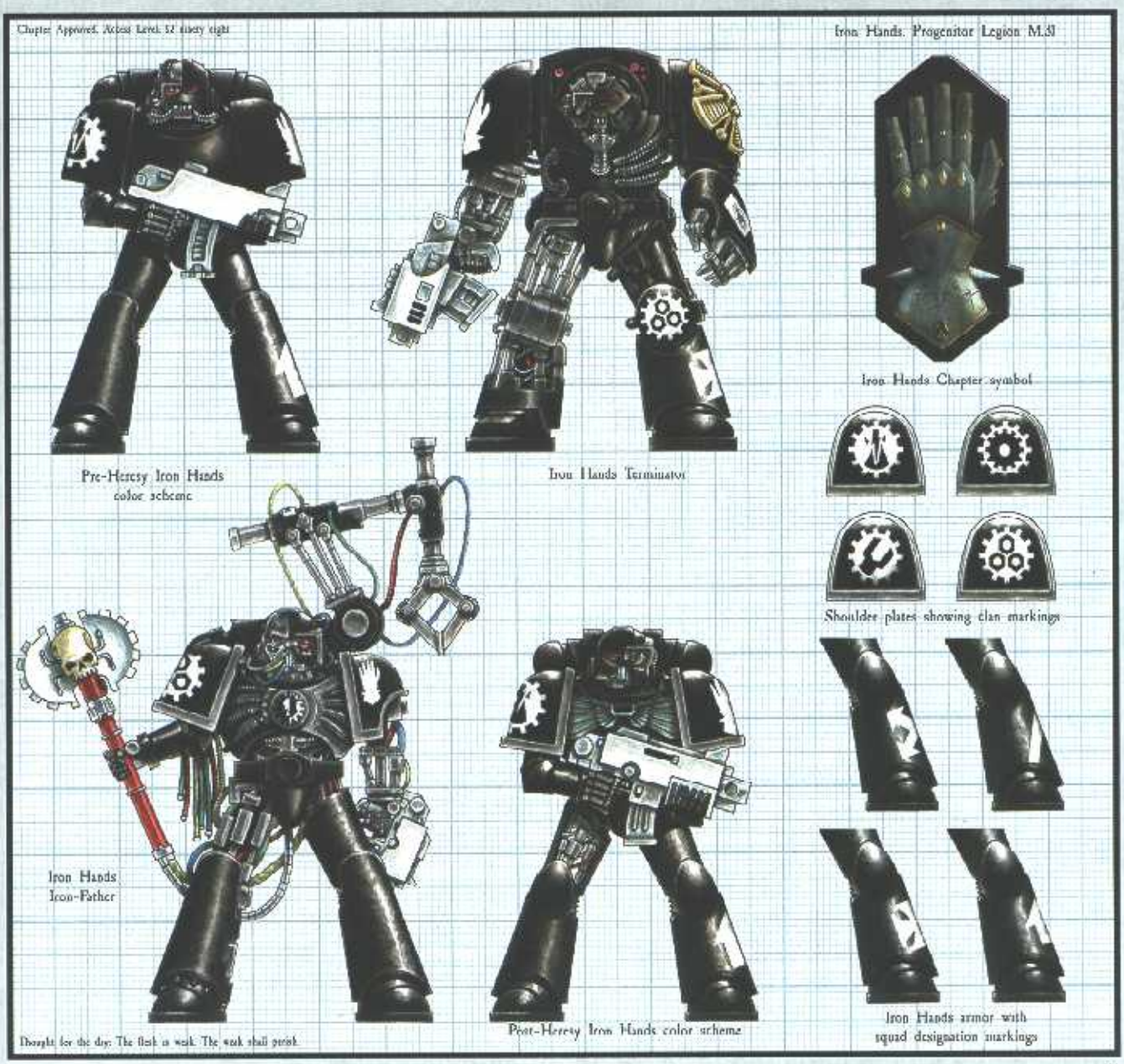
The most famous heroic story of Ferrus was his titanic battle against Asirnoth, the Great Silver Wyrm. This is recounted in the Canticle of the Travels, an epic poem of unknown origin that is still taught to Clan children at their parent's knee. He had stalked the great beast for days through the legendary Land of Shadows – the fearful land of the ancients, a place of great fear and mystery. This place, long since lost, was said to be a land of metal and stone relics of giant proportions, remnants of a forgotten age. The ghost-spirits of the clans are said to roam there once they leave the world of the living. The Canticle describes the monstrous creature as having skin made of living metal that was impervious to harm. Try as he might, Ferrus could not pierce the metal hide of the beast, his fists pummeling harmlessly against it. Fighting the creature for days on end, across continents and seas, Ferrus remained undaunted, confident of his own abilities. He eventually slew the great beast by holding the writhing creature submerged in a lava flow, enduring horrific pain, but bearing it stoically. When he finally removed his arms from the lava, the Wyrm was no more. His hands however were encased in the same living metal that the creature's skin was made of, a metal that was as flexible as flesh, as strong as the hardest ceramite. It is known that myths involving Ferrus and his metal hands precede the Canticle

of Travels, but only in the Canticle is this explanation given as to how the metal came to be fused to his body.

He returned to the clans after his travels filled with new and wonderful ideas, which he taught to all who wished to learn. He created strange and powerful weapons and tools out of metal, shaping them with his living metal hands. He taught the clans such wonders that they never could have imagined possible. It was a time of greatness for the people of Medusa – the civilization of the clans advanced at a tremendous pace, and the people became increasingly strong and proud.

When the heavens split open for the second time in history, and dark Medusa was once again filled with light, the clans were confused and frightened. They could not understand what this might mean for them and their world. They were happy as they were and saw whatever was coming as a threat. Ferrus did not speak, but left the clans immediately to travel to the Northern Reaches, where the light had descended. The clans grew worried as days passed with no word of their Savior. A great council was called, the first of its type ever formed on Medusa, with representatives from each of the clans present. They argued over what should be done, but could come to no agreement. Days turned to weeks and the people grew desperate in their unease. This unease turned to terror as the land literally erupted beneath their feet. They ran out of the council great-tent in their panic, savage electrical storms ripping the skies asunder above them. They wailed in their dread for the fury of the storm seemed far from natural, and they felt certain the end of their world drew near. The terrible storm assaulted the land for a week and a day, so it is said, after which time an unearthly silence descended. The clans returned to the great council unsure what would come of such dire portents.

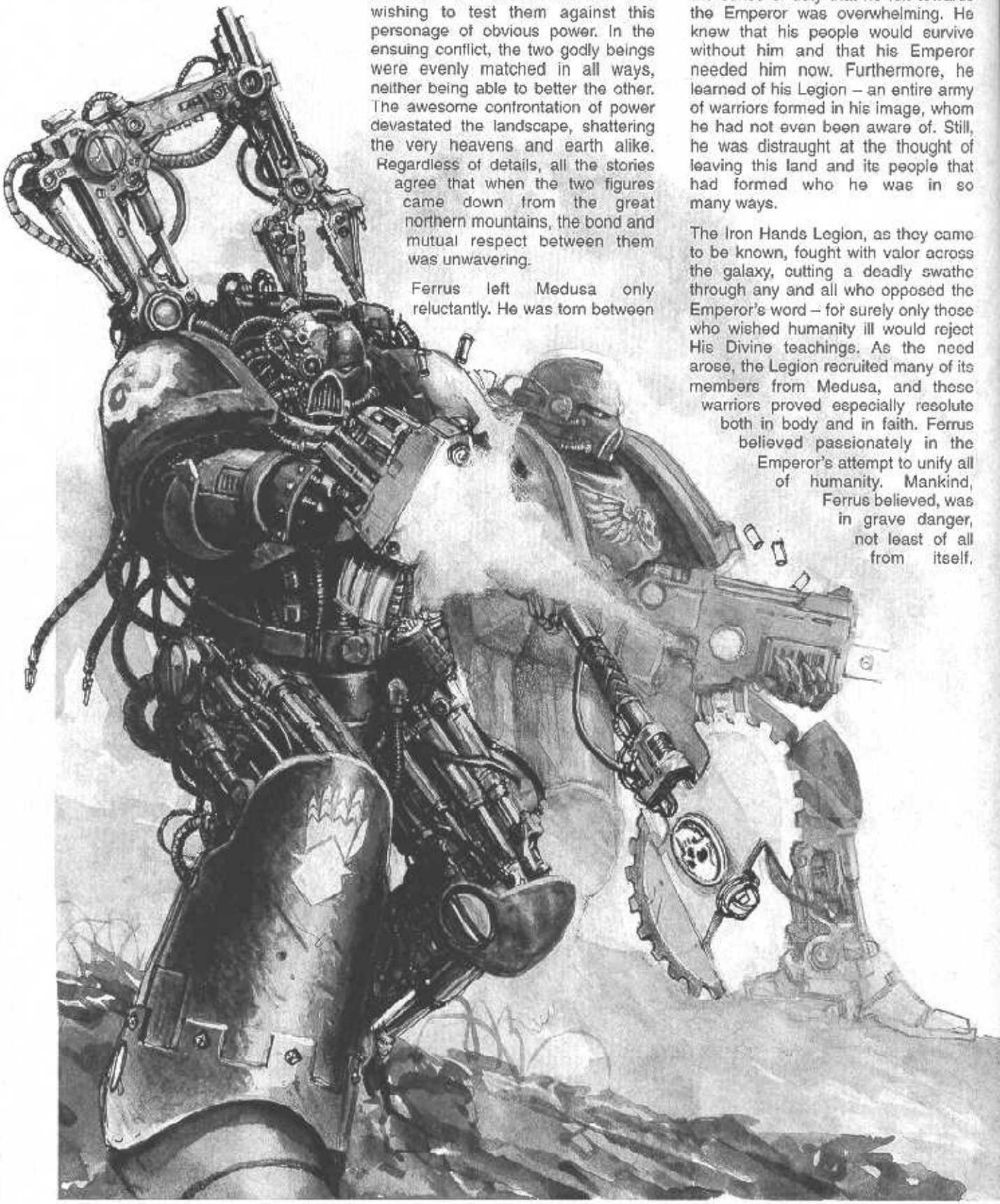
The next morning the doors to the great council were thrown wide and Ferrus strode in, resplendent in his magnificence. At his side walked a figure that stood as his equal, a radiant figure who awed the clansmen as much as Ferrus had always done. The very air was said to crackle with the combined power that exuded from the pair, and the bond between them was immediately apparent.


Chapter Approved, Access Level: 52 ninety eight
Iron Hands, Progenitor Legion M.31
Pre-Heresy Iron Hands color scheme
Iron Hands Terminator
Iron Hands Chapter symbol
Shoulder plates showing clan markings
Iron Hands Iron-Father
Post-Heresy Iron Hands color scheme
Iron Hands armor with squad designation markings
Thought for the day: The flesh is weak. The weak shall perish.

What actually occurred when the two Divine beings met is unknown. The myths surrounding the meeting of these two most powerful and heroic of figures revolve around a clash of wills and power that tore the land asunder. Many of the myths relate to how when Ferrus saw the Emperor, he recognized in him an equal. He strode up the mountains to confront him, confident of his own abilities and wishing to test them against this personage of obvious power. In the ensuing conflict, the two godly beings were evenly matched in all ways, neither being able to better the other. The awesome confrontation of power devastated the landscape, shattering the very heavens and earth alike. Regardless of details, all the stories agree that when the two figures came down from the great northern mountains, the bond and mutual respect between them was unwavering.

Ferrus left Medusa only reluctantly. He was torn between conflicting feelings of loyalty. On the one hand were his people whom he had helped to flourish, his beloved Medusa that had tempered and strengthened him. On the other hand the sense of duty that he felt towards the Emperor was overwhelming. He knew that his people would survive without him and that his Emperor needed him now. Furthermore, he learned of his Legion – an entire army of warriors formed in his image, whom he had not even been aware of. Still, he was distraught at the thought of leaving this land and its people that had formed who he was in so many ways.

The Iron Hands Legion, as they came to be known, fought with valor across the galaxy, cutting a deadly swathe through any and all who opposed the Emperor's word – for surely only those who wished humanity ill would reject His Divine teachings. As the need arose, the Legion recruited many of its members from Medusa, and these warriors proved especially resolute both in body and in faith. Ferrus believed passionately in the Emperor's attempt to unify all of humanity. Mankind, Ferrus believed, was in grave danger, not least of all from itself.



Unless it stood united, it would slowly be destroyed, piece by piece.

He saw many weak people around him and saw that infirmity as a plague. He would rather see those weak links of humanity destroyed than have them pose a threat, an unnecessary frailty that would pose a burden to the rest. On Medusa, the weak children were exposed to the elements so as not to place an unnecessary encumbrance on the rest of the community. So, too, when the time came that an adult was incapable of providing for the community, that person left their clan. Those who accepted the Emperor's Divine teachings were embraced. Those who did not were cut down without pity. The ruthlessness of the Legion and its Primarch terrified those who stood in the way of their relentless approach, and many worlds turned to the Emperor out of the overwhelming fear of retribution that these callous warriors were becoming renowned for.

The Horus Heresy

It is said that Horus, the first and most trusted of the Emperor's Primarchs, was held in great esteem by Ferrus, who appreciated his martial ideals. The news of Horus' treachery was met with an outrage by the Iron Hands and their Primarch alike. They were disgusted at the weakness of those who they had previously called brothers. Their Holy Crusade had led them to a far outlying section of the galaxy, and Ferrus fumed over their remote position. Nevertheless, full of righteous anger the Iron Hands turned their ships for Istvaan V, where the traitorous Warmaster was gathering his might. Ferrus despaired for humanity, when it seemed that even the most devoted of battle brothers could be turned from their divine mission. He raged at the flaws of his fellow men, all of whom seemed susceptible to weakness except those of his own Legion. He became even more strict on himself and his brothers, training against such dangerous fragility in all its forms.

Ferrus chose the fastest of the Legion's ships, and together with his most veteran troops, sped towards Istvaan V ahead of the rest of the Legion. As they had feared, the majority of the fleet arrived too late to take part in the attack, and it was with dread and horror that they learned of the disastrous treachery that had greeted their Primarch's attack. He and the Veterans joined with six other Legions in the planetary assault. Ferrus spearheaded the attack with two other Legions, suffering horrendous casualties as they dropped into the planet's atmosphere. The four Legions that were backing up the initial attack turned on the unprotected flank of the loyalists in an unforeseen betrayal, sealing the doom of the Legions, who were massacred in the ensuing battle.

What became of the great Primarch Ferrus remains a mystery. It is known that when the Legions showed their true colors, he realized his impending doom and attacked the traitors with renewed fury, so desperate was he to face Horus. The number of the Iron Hands were few, however, and they alone were not enough to back up Ferrus's attack, though they died trying. The Iron Hands have never forgiven the Salamanders or the Ravenguard for failing to follow his lead. They believe that had they done so, Horus would have fallen, triggering the collapse of the forces of Chaos. The body of Ferrus was never found, however, and many believe he somehow survived. One particular story is that his wrecked body was rescued and restored, and that he took refuge on Mars where he resides still, though this is violently refuted by the Iron Hands themselves.

The Iron Hands despaired as to the fate of Mankind. Their distress and confusion grew when they learned that the God-Emperor had fallen in a titanic battle with the corrupted Horus.

'And lo, despair was compounded, for Mankind had lost not only He Who Broke the Darkness, Ferrus Manus, the Shining Light of Medusa, cut down by Foul Corruption and Betrayal: for worse was to come, and there was much anguish and horror, for the Most Holy God-Emperor was, alas, to be lost to the world of Man.'

Extract from the Scriptorium of Iron

Having lost all of its veterans in the disastrous assault on Istvaan V, the crippled Legion returned to Medusa full of anger. Their brooding fury was directed at those whose weakness had forced them into a situation where their Primarch was lost and the Crusade abandoned. Their anger grew as time passed and even extended to a resentment towards those loyal Legions who could not protect the Emperor. They felt sure that had they been closer to Terra, then things would have worked out differently. They cursed the Warmaster Horus, who they believed had known of the Iron Hands' unyielding faith and strength, and whose subtle manipulations had surely arranged for them to be far away from both Terra and Istvaan V at the moment he struck.

Taking refuge in their anger, the Iron Hands have used that emotion to further strengthen themselves against the dangers of frailty. This became their guiding devotion, and they use any means necessary to destroy any form of weakness that they perceive in themselves and others. They do this without remorse, for they see that they are doing humanity a blessing by removing such a dangerous failing. Only a strong and united humanity will survive, and so until the return of Ferrus when he will lead Man out of Darkness, the Iron Hands strengthen and prepare themselves, seeking to eradicate any weak links that could once more threaten the eventual unification of humanity. There were dark stories told of the Legion replacing its lost warriors with purely mechanical power armored creations, though these rumors were never substantiated, nor were they widely believed.

Home World

The world of Medusa is a harsh realm of perpetual gloom, situated precariously close to the Eye of Terror. The sun almost never breaks through the dark and polluted sky, as it constantly churns over a land of frozen mountain ranges, interspersed with volcanoes and boiling hot geysers. The landscape is under constant flux, the shifting of tectonic plates forming new mountains and seas, and destroying them as quickly as they are created.

The people of Medusa are a hardy race that flourishes despite the hostile environment. They are in a constant battle with the elements and with each other, as each clan vies for hard to come by and jealously defended resources. The unpredictable nature of the landscape of Medusa means that the little that is built will last for very long, except in those few areas of relative calm. As such, the clans build very few permanent structures, but rather carry their possessions and livelihoods along with them as they traverse the landscape. In days gone past the clans hauled great caravans along by hand. The inhabitants of Medusa still follow this tradition, though the means of transport has changed to reflect the changing times. Great caterpillar-like mining haulers crawl across the landscape in grand processions as the clans move. These haulers constantly disgorge their raw

exhausts into the atmosphere, adding to the thickening sulphurous clouds that swirl around the planet like a shroud.

Karaashi, the Ice Pinnacle, can still be seen today, though it is said to be half the size it once was. A great gaping hole at its peak that spews ash and steam into the atmosphere is evidence of where the shining light of Ferrus crashed an age previously. Still it rumbles the anger of Medusa – a constant reminder of the need for vigilance. The clans of Medusa prepare for that day when the Ice Pinnacle ceases to rumble Medusa's unease. For that day, it is foretold, will mark the second coming of the great Primarch – with his return, Medusa will be at last content.

Combat Doctrine

The Iron Hands' particular hatred for weakness in any form or nature has a marked effect on their combat doctrine. This hatred is extended to incorporate the physical body, and they see weakness even in their own augmented physiques. These perceived frailties are ruthlessly eradicated through any possible means. This has further developed to a near worship of the mechanical that approaches the zeal and devotion of the Adeptus Mechanicus. A weak body can easily be broken or led into temptations of the flesh, so they believe, and this is what the Iron Hands hate and fear most of all. Consequently, the harder, more mechanical the body, the less room there is for physical failings and frailties.

The Iron-Fathers fuel the hatred and anger of the Iron Hands with rousing speeches and oratories, encouraging its growth and intensity. The Chapter takes this powerful emotion onto the battlefield, where it is focused against the enemy at hand, whoever that may be. The Iron Hands fight with renowned intensity and determination, certain in the knowledge that they act for the good of Mankind by crusading against the weak and corrupted. The cold fury of the Chapter as it goes to battle is fearful to witness and deadly in its effectiveness. The bitter Space Marines advance machine-like and relentless, throwing themselves violently at the enemy in their focused, severe fervor.

The Iron Hands revere the limited number of Terminator suits and Dreadnoughts that they possess and treat them with the utmost respect and devotion. Entire squads of Terminators are rare, however, for the inspiration they create amongst the ranks is better served when they act as leaders of individual squads. Sergeants will often wear Terminator armor that is rumored to be physically bonded to them, and it is not uncommon for battle forces to be led by Dreadnoughts. The inspiration which their presence causes amongst the Iron Hands proves to be of more benefit when acting within these roles.

Organization

The organization of the Iron Hands changed upon its return to Medusa. The Legion was split into three separate and individual Chapters. The newly formed Red Talons and the Brazen Claw left their brethren and founded their own fortress-monasteries, since becoming increasingly reclusive. One Chapter retained the name of the Legion, and based itself on Medusa, the home world of their Primarch. The organization of the Chapter has moved away from the standard Codex form, becoming more like a reflection of the native clans of Medusa. Contact between the three Chapters deteriorated as they became increasingly insular, while contact with other Space Marine Chapters became virtually non-existent.

There are ten Clan Companies which act in much the same way as the Battle Companies of traditional Codex Chapters, being versatile and capable in any given situation. However, where traditional Codex Chapters have a distinct separation between the various Companies that form it, such as the 10th Company being formed of Scouts, the Iron Hands Chapter is made up solely of its ten Clan Companies. These generally act as completely separate entities in their own right, and it is not unknown for minor skirmishes to break out between Clan Companies. This is encouraged, so as to keep the Space Marines strong and vigilant.

Each Clan Company has its own hierarchy and is responsible for the recruitment of new Space Marines in order to keep the Clan Company numbers at the required level. These new recruits are taken from the clans of Medusa who embrace their new Clan Company and the Chapter as a whole. The Clan Companies are nomadic, much like the clans they are recruited from. They travel the galaxy, following their continuing crusade against weakness and corruption.

When the Iron Hands return to Medusa they travel the inhospitable Medusa landscape seeking recruits, remaining ever vigilant against weakness in any guise appearing on their home world. The Iron Hands do not maintain a fortress-monastery as such, for the shifting lands would inevitably make any such structure temporary. Rather, each individual Clan Company maintains a mobile version, great land behemoths that constantly traverse the treacherous landscape. These fully automated creations, arcane wonders made by the Adeptus Mechanicus, are serviced by great armies of mechanical servitors, keeping them in perfect order during the Chapter's absence.

As a direct result of their respect for the mechanical body, the Iron Hands differ significantly in some regards from the standard Codex organization. On induction to the Chapter, new recruits have their left hands removed and replaced with bionics, a ritual symbolizing their link with Ferrus and their refusal of the weakness of the flesh. This is the start of a slow process of mechanization of the body for the recruits, leading towards the stage when the entire organic body can be rejected. The ultimate aim for Iron Hands Marines is to become mind-fused with the body of a hulking Dreadnought – the perfect blend of organic and mechanic.

One particularly revered and respected warrior is chosen to represent each clan within the Chapter. Together, these ten warriors form the Great Council of the Iron Hands. As such, there is no single commander of the Chapter. They see this as a strength and a precaution, so that no individual can lead the Iron Hands astray, as they saw happen to so many of their brother Marines. The Great Clan Council is often formed of ancient Dreadnoughts, warriors who have long given up the frailties of their organic bodies.

Another variation from the standard Codex form is the distinct lack of Chaplains within the Chapter. They are replaced in sorts by the Iron-Fathers, who in effect take the dual role of Techmarine and Chaplain. The reverence the Iron Hands hold for the mechanical is represented by the Iron-Father, who has ties to the Cult Mechanicus as well as acknowledging the supreme divinity of the Emperor.

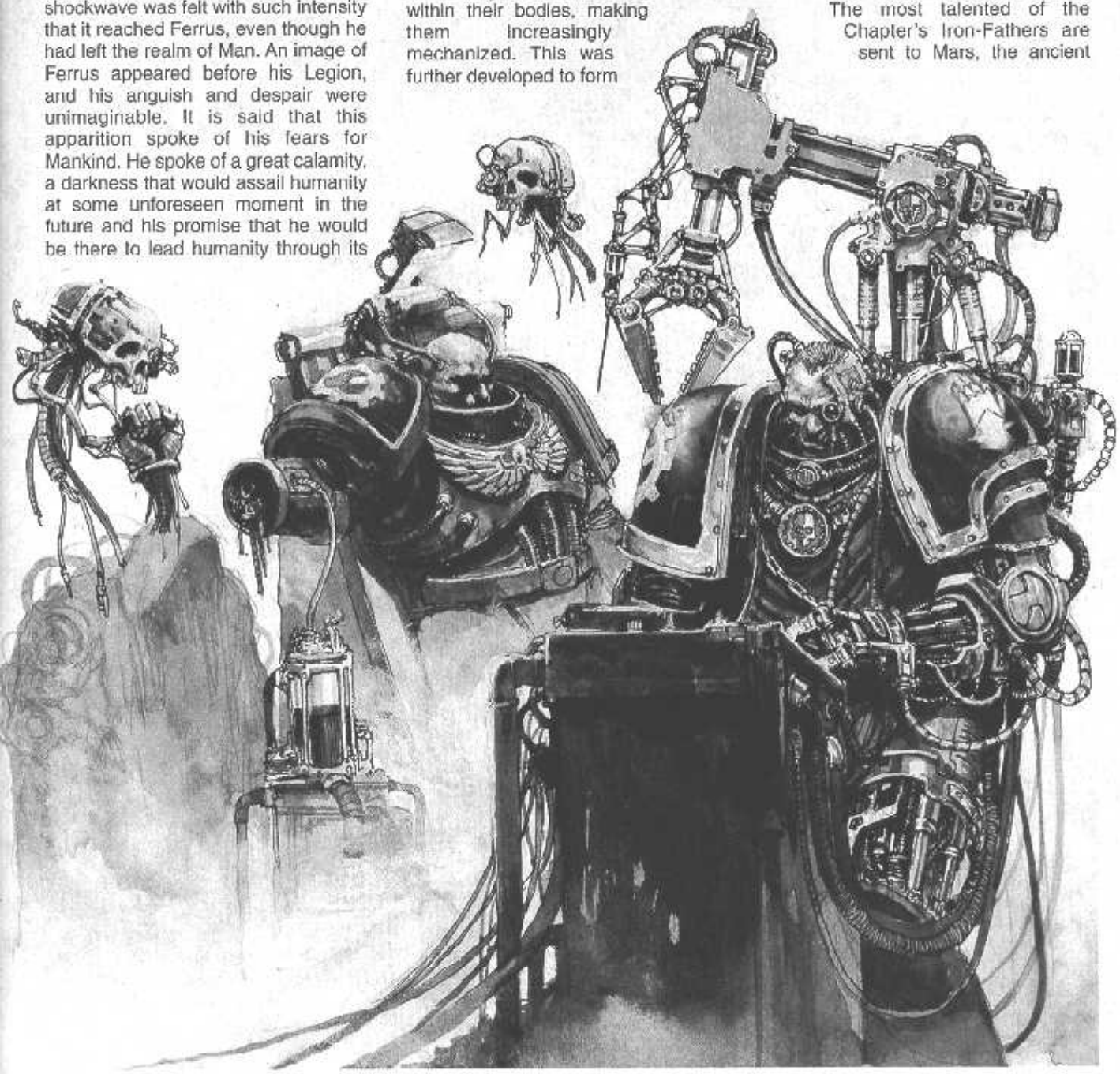
Beliefs

The anger and hatred that the Iron Hands feel towards weakness grows daily. They are increasingly doubtful of the strength and worth of their brother Chapters, becoming resigned to the fact that they alone can stamp out the deficiencies that they see besetting humanity from all sides. They perceive weakness in everything around them, and prepare for the day when Ferrus will at last return to them; that time when they will stand firm with their Primarch in the final reunification of Mankind.

According to their Scriptures, the moment the Emperor fell the psychic shockwave was felt with such intensity that it reached Ferrus, even though he had left the realm of Man. An image of Ferrus appeared before his Legion, and his anguish and despair were unimaginable. It is said that this apparition spoke of his fears for Mankind. He spoke of a great calamity, a darkness that would assail humanity at some unforeseen moment in the future and his promise that he would be there to lead humanity through its trials of darkness. Amongst the Iron Hands it is taught that he ascended to an unearthly paradise realm where he fights eternally, becoming ever stronger. And so it is said that Ferrus Manus left the world of Man, preparing for the time when he is required again, that Time of Darkness when his light is needed most of all.

The actions of their Primarch, so the Iron Hands believe, implicitly warned against the weakness of the flesh. His clearly superior metallic hands have long been interpreted as a direct message of this to his Legion. The Iron Hands, therefore, follow their Primarch's example by gradually eliminating the inherent weakness within their bodies, making them increasingly mechanized. This was further developed to form the most important principle of the Iron Hands: the unyielding mind and the unyielding body. Under this maxim, the strongest, most incorruptible warrior is formed, so they believe. This has proved to be extremely effective, for in all their long and glorious history, there has never been any record of an Iron Hands Space Marine failing in his duty as a result of any physical frailty.

The Iron Hands have a close link with the Adeptus Mechanicus, and embrace many of the beliefs of the Machine Cult. The reverence they hold for the mechanical, the physical embodiment of knowledge, is frowned upon by the majority of more Codex Space Marine Chapters. The most talented of the Chapter's Iron-Fathers are sent to Mars, the ancient



THE RETAKING OF THE CONTQUAL SUB-SECTOR

The reclamation of the heretic sub sector of Contqual was achieved with such astonishing swiftness and fury that it stands as an example to all those who contemplate inciting the wrath of the Iron Hands. Indeed many would-be usurpers and heretics have renewed their faith in the glory of the Emperor under the threat of the Iron Hands' fearsome retribution.

Contqual contained several planetary systems, primarily conglomerations of agricultural worlds rich in resources. They had prospered in a happy isolation for centuries, and the people lived a decadent life, believing they had found an earthly paradise far removed from the turmoil and ugliness of the rest of the universe. The taint of Chaos spread quickly through the upper hierarchy of the planets, feeding off the desires and weaknesses of those in positions of power. Within a month, the entire sub-sector writhed with the corrupting essence of Chaos.

The terrible fury of the Iron Hands was overwhelming, and they stormed into the sub-sector, taking the first few planets before any form of resistance could be assembled. Entire populations were ruthlessly cut down to a man, slaughtered while their pleas for mercy went unheard. The death of every heretic and traitor only strengthened the Imperium, and the Chapter had no mercy for those who would let such corruption overtake their world.

The pivotal battle came on the hive world of Shardenus, the nucleus for the Chaotic powers that were rife in the sub-sector. A tear had appeared in the fabric of real space, opening a direct link to the warp. Foul abominations formed of pure chaos matter poured through the rift to be welcomed and embraced by the twisted inhabitants of the planet.

Daemons whispered sweet words of corruption into the ears of the assaulting Space Marines, but true to their beliefs not a single warrior was tempted. The Iron Hands fought with such ferocity and hatred that despite horrendous losses, they eradicated the foul presence within days. The rift was closed by the combined force of will of the Chapter Librarians, and the cleansing of the sub-sector continued.

After the fall of Shardenus, the rest of the sub-sector was quickly forced into submission, returning humbly to their faith in the Emperor. One after another, the worlds turned on their perverted overlords in mass rebellions. The Iron Hands executed one in every three citizens in an intensive mass cleansing, a punishment and warning to remain ever vigilant against the inherent dangers of weakness. In what has become typical fashion, the evidence of the unforgiving fury of the Iron Hands inspired a wave of devotion that spread before them. When the Chapter left Contqual, mere weeks after its arrival, they left a sub-sector whose surviving worlds were to become amongst the most devoted of all those within the Imperium.

and mysterious home world of the Adeptus Mechanicus, where they study under the Tech-Priest Engineers. The Iron Hands often make use of weaponry and armory that is generally unseen outside the Mars-based Cult. What the mysterious and typically insular Cult Mechanicus gains from this strange relationship is unclear.

Geneseed

The fanatically intense hatred of weakness displayed by the Iron Hands would appear to gloss over a hidden and deeply rooted fear of the physical form that is evident throughout the Chapter. This fear seems to increase as the Space Marine matures in age, resulting in more and more extreme mechanization of the body. Where this fear truly originates is unclear, although it is widely believed that some genetic flaw is at work. This defect seems to be somehow kept under control, or at least concealed, by the mechanical augmentations the Space Marines routinely endure.

Notably reclusive, the Iron Hands are particularly hostile to outside interference, and they tolerate the continued investigations by the Inquisition with bareley concealed disdain. Uncharacteristically, the Inquisition appears relatively unconcerned with the Chapter as a whole. They seem to have identified some aberration within the Chapter, but refrain from acting on it, for they do not see the flaw as inherently dangerous to the Imperium. Rather, the Iron Hands Chapter, with its particular devotion to the eradication of the weakness they perceive all around them, are (for now) seen as a useful form of enforcement within the Imperium, and their effectiveness is beyond question.

Great Heroes

Paullian Blantar was an inspiration to his Chapter who served the Kaargul Clan Company for many centuries. His technical abilities became apparent soon after his induction into the Iron Hands, and within decades he had become the pre eminent Iron-Father of his Clan Company. The other Clans sent their young aspirants to study under this great master, and the entire Chapter benefited from his expertise. In the realm of bionic enhancement he was unparalleled, and his refinements of the augmentation process distinctly affected the direction of the Chapter.

It was Paullian who led the dramatic counter attack against the insidious Dark Eldar on the industrial world Kaladrone, rescuing the badly wounded warleader Bannus and carrying him to safety. Bannus had been terribly mutilated by the twisted aliens, and it was Paullian himself who performed the tech-surgery that enabled Bannus to continue to lead his Clan for centuries to come. Indeed, Bannus still leads his Clan Company as an ancient and powerful Dreadnought. Being an integral member of the Great Clan Council, his wisdom and experience continue to benefit the Chapter as a whole.

The disdain that Paullian felt for his organic body was legendary. The augmentation of his body was a constant process, and he ceaselessly sought new ways of strengthening himself. Indeed, towards the end of his long and successful life span, there was little organic left of him other than his brilliant, mechanically-oriented mind. The ritual scarring and punishment that he inflicted on the few exposed areas of his skin became synonymous with his skill as a tech. The Iron-Fathers of the Chapter as a whole routinely scar their bodies in reverence to him, and they uniformly aspire to his technical brilliance and insight.

USING AN IRON HANDS ARMY IN WARHAMMER 40,000

Iron Hands use the following units from Codex Space Marines:

HQ	Space Marine Heroes, Librarian, Iron-Father (see below), Command squad, Venerable Dreadnought (see below)
ELITES	Dreadnought, Space Marine Veteran squad
TROOPS	Space Marine Tactical squad, Scout squad
FAST ATTACK	Assault squad, Bike Squadron, Attack Bike squadron, Scout Bike squadron, Land Speeder squadron, Land Speeder Tornado, Land Speeder Typhoon
HEAVY SUPPORT	Devastator squad, Predator Annihilator, Predator Destructor, Vindicator, Land Raider, Whirlwind

A copy of Codex: Space Marines is necessary to field an Iron Hands Space Marine army. The following rules and Codex changes apply. Note that the entire army must be Iron Hands, not just one or two squads.

WARGEAR

'More Machine than Man' – Bionics: The Iron Hands constantly mechanize their bodies, striving always to strengthen themselves. Iron Hands characters may purchase bionics for half the usual points cost.

5 Points for Iron Hands Characters

Terminator Armor: The highly valued suits of Iron Hands Terminator armor are worn by inspiring individuals within squads, rather than by a specific squad of Space Marines. The Iron Hands may not choose Terminator squads as Elite choices. However, Iron Hands Veteran Sergeants can be given Terminator armor chosen from the Space Marine Armory.

Mechanicus Protectiva: The Iron-Fathers do not wear the Rosarius like the Chaplains of other Chapters. Instead they wear the Mechanicus Protectiva, a powerful arcane device often incorporated into the Iron-Father's power armor. The small energy field projected by the Mechanicus Protectiva provides the Iron-Father with an Invulnerable 4+ save. This may be taken instead of the Iron-Father's normal armor save.

Iron-Father and 0-4 Servitor Bodyguards (HQ Choice)

	Points	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Iron Father	75	5	5	4	4	2	5	3	9	3+
Servitor	+10	3	3	4	5	1	1	1	8	5+

Weapons: Power weapon, Mechanicus Protectiva and Bionics.

Options: The Iron-Father may be given any equipment allowed from the Space Marine Armory. This may include 'Techmarines only' items.

Servitor Bodyguards may be equipped with close combat implants (count as power weapons) at +10 pts each.

SPECIAL RULES

Independent Character: The Iron-Father is an Independent Character and follows all the special rules as detailed in the Warhammer 40,000 rulebook unless he is accompanied in battle by a Servitor Bodyguard.

Servitor Bodyguard: Servitors are gifts bestowed upon the Iron-Father by the Adeptus Mechanicus. They are half-human, half-machine creations that carrying out menial tasks for the Iron-Father and serve him as a bodyguard.

To represent this, an Iron-Father may be accompanied by a bodyguard of between 1-4 Servitor Bodyguards. The Servitors and the Iron-Father form a single unit. If the Iron-Father is killed, then his Servitors will deactivate and are removed also.

0-1 Venerable Dreadnought (HQ Choice)

Points/Model	WS	BS	S	FRONT	SIDE	REAR	I	A
125	5	5	6(10)	12	12	10	4	3

Type: Walker **Crew:** One Space Marine

Weapons: The Dreadnought's left arm is equipped with a Dreadnought close combat weapon that has a built in storm bolter. The Dreadnought's right arm is equipped with one weapon from the following list: assault cannon at +30 pts; twin-linked lascannon at +50 pts; twin-linked heavy bolter at +30 pts; multi-melta at +40 pts; plasma cannon at +40 pts; twin-linked autocannon at +35 pts.

Options: The Venerable Dreadnought may be equipped with any of the following vehicle upgrades for the cost listed in the Space Marine Armory: extra armor, searchlight or smoke launchers. No upgrade may be chosen more than once per Venerable Dreadnought.

The storm bolter may be upgraded to a heavy flamer at an additional cost of +10 pts.

The close combat weapon can be upgraded to a missile launcher at an additional cost of +10 pts.

The Venerable Dreadnought may be equipped with a Sacred Standard from the Space Marine Wargear list at an additional cost of +20 pts.

SPECIAL RULES

Old & Wise: Venerable Dreadnoughts are revered, ancient warriors who are extremely wise in the ways of war. If an Iron Hands army includes one then it may re-roll the dice if the mission being played has a dice roll to see who gets the first turn.

Hard to Kill: Venerable Dreadnoughts are extraordinarily tenacious. To represent this, when the Venerable Dreadnought takes a glancing or penetrating hit, you may force your opponent to re-roll the resulting damage. You must accept the result of the second roll.

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First Founding

An in-depth look at the First Founding Legions of the Adeptus Astartes

CHOSEN OF KHORNE

The World Eaters Space Marine Legion

by Graham McNeill

Of all the Space Marine Legions created by the Emperor to reconquer the galaxy during the Great Crusade, none were more feared than the World Eaters. At the forefront of the bloodiest assaults and most vicious battles, the name of World Eaters became a byword for bloodshed and terror on a horrifying scale.

Origins

Kept chained within the deepest dungeon of the Library Sanctus on Terra, the bloodstained pages of the Liber Malum records the fate of those who have trod the path to damnation. To even mention its name is to risk madness. Many are the blasphemous heretics and tyrants whose names sully the pages with their treacheries, but foremost amongst these damned souls is the name of Angron, Primarch of the World Eaters Space Marine Legion.

The legend of Angron is incomplete, and there is much that is not known or so shrouded in dark legend that the true facts are impossible to discern. How Angron came to be separated from the Emperor so soon after his creation and the name of the planet he eventually came to call home is unknown. Indeed where this planet was or even if it still exists is uncertain. Carpinus' *Speculum Historiale* speaks of Angron's world as technologically advanced (though does not name it), ruled over by a caste of wealthy elite who lived in decadent opulence while the populace of their cities lived in abject poverty in the slums surrounding their walled palaces. To distract the populace from their daily woes, the rulers of this world held regular death games in colossal arenas with cybernetically enhanced gladiators who battled in mortal combat to satisfy the bloodlust of the people. It was on this world that the Primarch Angron was eventually to be discovered, but how he came to be there is unrecorded.

However it came to pass, it is known that Angron was discovered by a slaver who chanced upon the bleeding figure of the Primarch, surrounded by scores of alien corpses, high in the northern mountains. History does not record to what race these aliens belonged, but many Imperial scholars believe them to have been Eldar, perhaps attacking the Primarch with some foreknowledge of what the future held for him. Angron had been grievously wounded, but was alive and, seeing that all his wounds were to the fore, the slaver realized that Angron must be a formidable warrior. Taken as a slave, Angron was nursed back to health and bio-neural implants were surgically grafted to his cerebral cortex. Relics from the Dark Age of Technology, these would boost a warrior's aggression and strength in battle and turn him into a frenzied killer. Angron was taken to the planet's capital where his obvious potential as a gladiator was soon realized, and he was bought by the largest and most patronized arena in the city. The cells below the arena were home to several thousand cyber gladiators, and Angron now took his place amongst them.

After only a few months, Angron had gained a bloody reputation as a proud warrior of fearsome skill with a strong sense of martial honor. He killed hundreds of warriors, in single and multiple combats, but those who fought well, he spared. Angron was a firm favorite of the baying crowds, and while he appeared to relish the life of a gladiator, he was always plotting ways to escape his life of slavery. He was a troublesome slave, with an instinctive anti-authoritarian streak and several times attempted to break out of the arena's dungeons. The fighters were held under extremely heavy security, with hundreds of heavily armed guards constantly on duty, and every attempt met with failure.

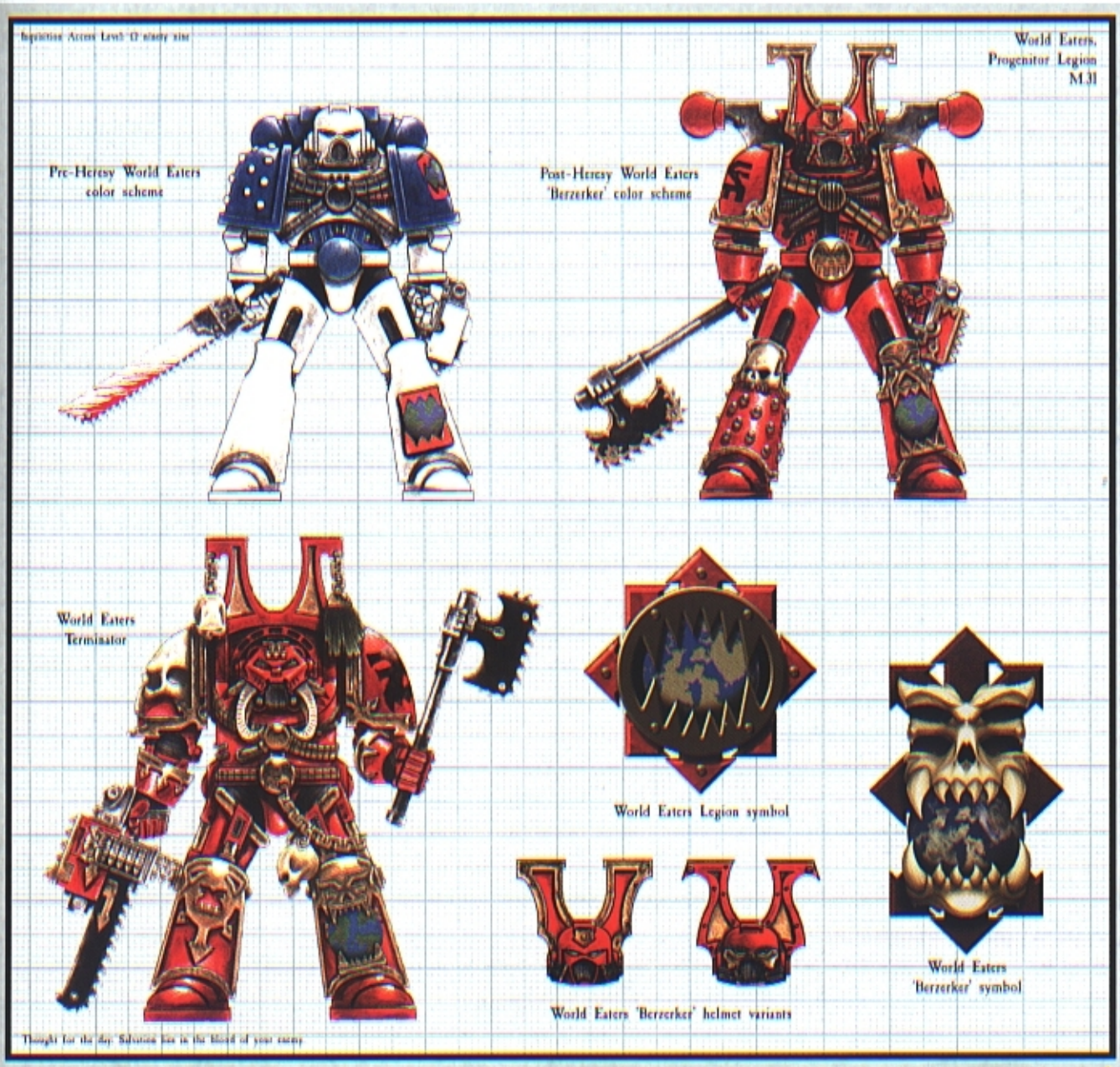
Within a few years, his fame had spread to every corner of the globe, and his reputation as a fearsome killer was well established. Thousands flocked to watch Angron fight, and, under his tutelage, the gladiators became deadlier and deadlier until no other arena's warriors could stand against them. Following another failed escape bid, Angron finally understood that he could not succeed alone. His unbending warrior's code and training methods had made him a well respected leader amongst the gladiators, and, with the largest death games on the planet rapidly approaching, Angron began planning his most daring escape attempt yet.

For these games, Angron was permitted to stage a vast display of battle involving every one of the arena's gladiators and, at its height, as the crowd drowned the arena in cheers, Angron's followers turned on their guards, butchering them and fighting their way free. Against soldiers armed with guns their casualties were horrendous, but nearly two thousand

managed to escape into the city, stealing what weapons and supplies they could before battling their way into the mountains. Angron's army took refuge in the highest reaches of the northern mountains, close to where he had been discovered by the slaver many years ago. The rulers of the planet immediately dispatched a force to destroy the escapee, but woefully underestimated the capabilities of Angron's slave army. Within days, a few pitiful survivors was all that remained of the once proud host, stumbling back to the city, their weapons taken and comrades slaughtered.

For the next few years, many such forces were sent against Angron's slave army, and each one was defeated, cut to pieces by the psychotic fury of the cybernetically enhanced warriors. But attrition and hunger were taking their toll on the slaves, and soon they numbered less than a thousand. On a mountain named Fedan Mhor, as darkness fell, Angron was finally surrounded by no less than five vastly superior armies and it looked as though the slave rebellion was finally over. Not even the Primarch could stand against such numbers, and the following day's battle would surely see him dead.

It was around this time that the Emperor came to this world, drawn by the psychic aura of the Primarch. The Emperor had observed Angron in secret from orbit for some time, watching with pride as he led the slaves in battle. Now he descended to the planet's surface, offering Angron leadership of the World Eaters Space Marine Legion and a place at his side. But, to the Emperor's surprise, Angron refused. His place was here, with his fellow slaves, and he would die before deserting them. Angron and the slaves dug their graves during the night, a signal to their enemies that they would fight to the death rather than surrender. The Emperor knew that even though Angron was a Primarch, he would perish in the coming battle and, bringing his ship into low orbit, teleported Angron away from Fedan Mhor. Without their leader, the morale of the slaves was destroyed and the following morning they were slaughtered by the combined armies of the planet's rulers. In space, as the Great Crusade continued, Angron eventually took command of the World Eaters but never forgave the Emperor

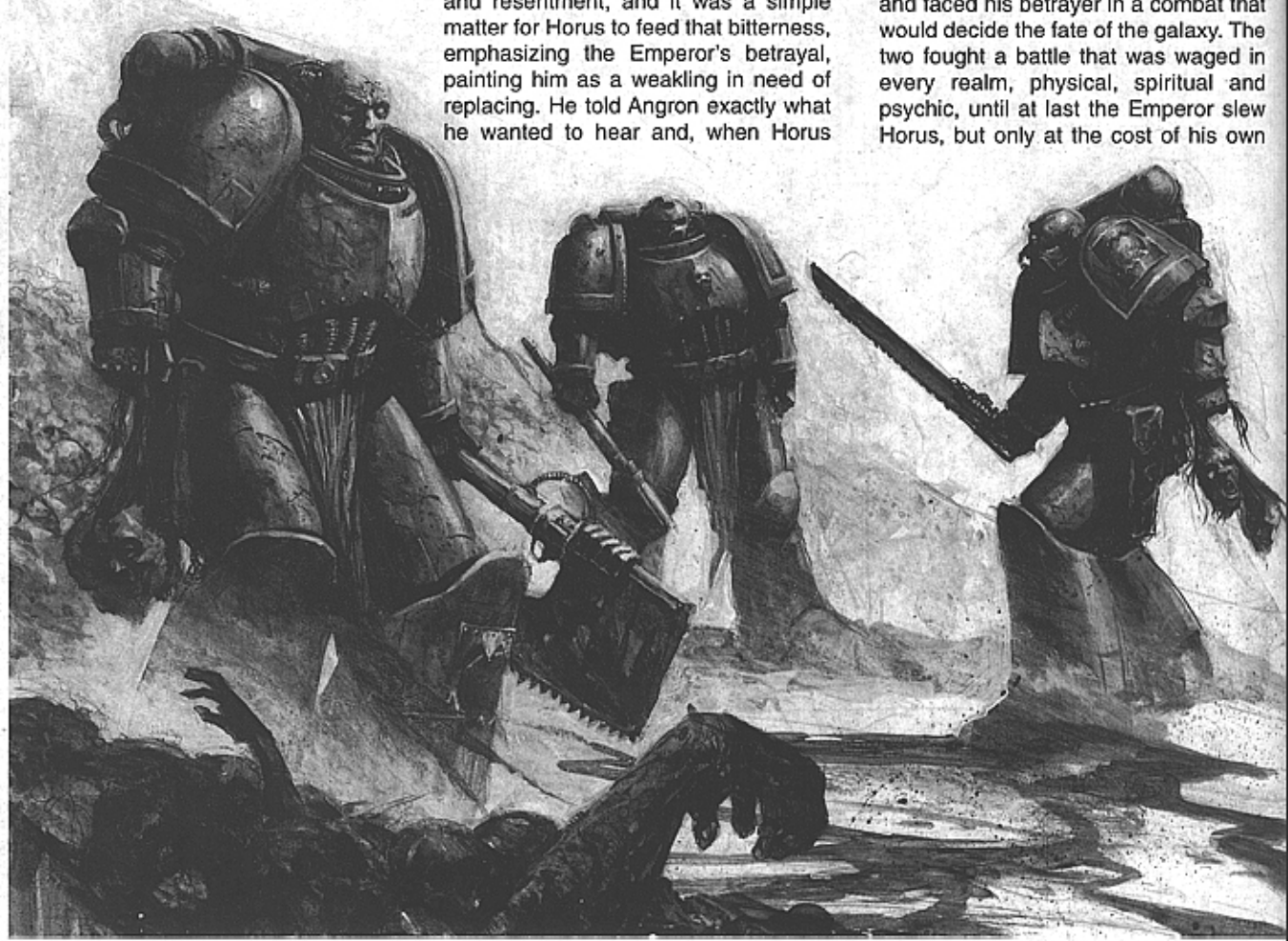


for his abduction from the planet and what he saw as a betrayal of his martial honor.

Knowing how effective at boosting a warrior's prowess the psycho surgery could be, Angron ordered the Techmarines of the World Eaters to duplicate the process, using the implants in his head as a template. However, the art of this technology's construction had long since been forgotten, and the early attempts at reproducing it were unreliable, often triggering uncontrollable and unstoppable psychotic episodes in the recipients. Eventually, the Techmarines were able to construct working implants that heightened aggression and strength, grafting them to whole companies of World Eaters Space Marines. Initially, the enhanced companies were highly successful, quickly gaining a fearsome reputation as terror troops. No mercy was offered by the World Eaters, only bloody death at the end of a chain-axe. The Liber Malum speaks of whole systems surrendering wholesale rather than face the wrath of the World Eaters. But it was only a matter of time before the Legion's use of psycho surgery on its recruits became widely known. Following the infamous Ghenna Scouring, where an entire planet's population were butchered in a single night of bloodshed, the World Eaters were censured by the Emperor and commanded to cease the use of implants.

Angron paid little heed to this and ordered the work of the Techmarines to continue, until almost every Space Marine in the Legion had undergone the ritual surgery. Blood rites became an increasingly important part of the Legion's heritage as their slaughter continued across the galaxy, and it became common practice for Space Marines to compete in the number of enemy skulls they could take in battle. Many of Angron's brother Primarchs voiced their concerns to the Emperor, and now the Master of Mankind made a fatal error. He dispatched Horus, the most trusted of all the Primarchs, to confront Angron and bring him back into line. Horus was a master psychologist and, unbeknownst to the Emperor, had already been corrupted by the Chaos powers. In Angron he saw a warrior consumed by bitterness and resentment, and it was a simple matter for Horus to feed that bitterness, emphasizing the Emperor's betrayal, painting him as a weakling in need of replacing. He told Angron exactly what he wanted to hear and, when Horus eventually betrayed the Emperor, beginning the first galactic civil war, Angron's World Eaters marched beside the Sons of Horus.

The ferocity and horror once visited upon the enemies of the Emperor by the World Eaters now fell upon the Imperium. The World Eaters fought in the vanguard of every battle, fighting in the bloodiest assaults, preferring to tear the enemy to pieces at close quarters rather than with long range firepower. Angron's warriors cut a bloody swathe across the galaxy towards Terra, drinking the blood of their victims and taking their skulls in honor of their new master, Khorne, the Blood God. On Terra, surviving vid logs from the siege of Terra show the World Eaters breaching the walls of the Imperial Palace, the twisted, red form of Angron wielding his glowing runesword at their head. The World Eaters reaped a bloody harvest on Terra, but ultimate victory was to be denied them. With the Dark Angels and Space Wolves en route to Terra, Horus gambled everything in order to end the siege, lowering the shields on his battle barge and daring the Emperor to come for him. The Emperor rose to the challenge and faced his betrayer in a combat that would decide the fate of the galaxy. The two fought a battle that was waged in every realm, physical, spiritual and psychic, until at last the Emperor slew Horus, but only at the cost of his own



humanity. Without the Great Betrayer to bind them, the Chaos host disintegrated and fled the planet. Angron was the last to leave, leading the World Eaters deep into the Eye of Terror. The battle had been lost, but the war would go on. He and his warriors had all eternity to seek revenge.

Home World

The home world of Angron remains a mystery to this day. No known record exists of where the Emperor encountered Angron, and none of those histories scanned by the scribes on Terra appear to match the description given in the *Speculum Historale* of Angron's world. Scholars postulate that Angron himself may have returned to his home world upon the outbreak of the Horus Heresy and destroyed it to avenge the death of his fellow slaves. It is certainly true that the World Eaters destroyed a number of worlds seemingly at random on their bloody advance to Terra, but whether one of these was his home world is a riddle that only Angron knows the answer to.

With the Heresy ended, the World Eaters fled to the Eye of Terror, the Legion swiftly degenerating into roving bands of Chaos renegades. As such they have no particular base or home world, each warband operating from whatever craft they can lay their bloodstained hands upon.

Combat Doctrine

The World Eaters have only one desire: to slay their enemies in close combat and take skulls for Khorne. To this end, the Legion cast aside their long ranged weapons and took up the chain-axe and pistol. The thirst for blood and slaughter has become such an overpowering need to the World Eaters that when battle is joined they rampage across the battlefield, roaring the name of Khorne, all strategy and tactics forgotten in their thirst for bloodshed. In combat, these frothing madmen are ferocious warriors who will fight to the death, knowing that their blood is as welcome to Khorne as that of their foes. Truly it is said that the World Eaters credo is victory or death.

Organization

Banished to the Eye of Terror and tied forever to the worship of Khorne, the blood rituals of the Legion became an even more important part of the World Eaters daily lives, mighty oceans of blood filled in his praise. The legendary tactical organization of the Space Marines broke down, washed away by the years of slaughter that followed. As more and more of the Legion's officers and champions were possessed by daemons or became mighty Chaos champions, the last vestiges of discipline and organization fell away, the once proud Space Marine Legion reduced to howling, berserk killers thirsting for death and bloodshed. After the Night of Madness on the daemon world of Skalathrax, when a champion named Khârn turned on his fellow World Eaters, the Legion tore itself apart in a day long slaughter, becoming nothing more than roving bands of renegades, endlessly questing for battle and death. Such bands vary enormously in size from single champions, small squads to company sized forces capable of untold destruction. The champions who lead these marauders will fight alongside almost any other Chaos Lord who is gathering his forces, asking for nothing more than the chance to spill blood in the name of Khorne. But even a Chaos Lord must be wary lest his head be added to the tally of skulls.

Beliefs

There is only one thing the World Eaters believe in; the spilling of blood. The sole purpose of their existence is to kill and to shed blood in their god's name. Whether that blood comes from a foe, an ally or even their own veins, it matters not. All that matters is that the pile of bloody skulls laid at the brass throne of Khorne grows ever larger.

THE CLEANSING OF ARIGGATA

During the heady days of the Great Crusade, the boundaries of the Emperor's space were continually being pushed back by his Primarchs. Many worlds welcomed the arrival of the Emperor's armies, while others foolishly resisted. Ariggata was a technologically advanced world that had been isolated from the Imperium for many centuries, and when Imperial envoys arrived bearing word of the Emperor's return, they were executed in a bloody gesture of independence. The military might of Ariggata was formidable, and thus the honor of its pacification fell to warriors from no less than three Legions, the Luna Wolves, the Ultramarines and the World Eaters. The Emperor's Warmaster, Horus, was in overall command of the force, and under his masterful generalship, the armies of Ariggata were quickly subdued until only the Basalt Citadel, seat of the planet's rulers, remained in enemy hands.

Imperial forces laid siege to the citadel, but the pacification was taking too long for Horus' liking, he wanted to be away from this world to seek further glory. To quickly end the siege he bombarded the mighty walls of the citadel from orbit, ordering Angron and the World Eaters to storm the breaches created and slay the enemy leaders. The walls of the citadel had been forged during the Dark Age of Technology and, despite a week long orbital bombardment, only a single breach was made. Roboute Guilliman counselled caution, but nether Horus or Angron were willing to wait. Angron threw the World Eaters at the walls of the Basalt Citadel, a firestorm of lasers and bullets wreaking bloody carnage amongst their ranks. The World Eaters were undaunted, a ramp of corpses allowing them to finally crest the breach and, once within the citadel's walls, the battle-maddened Space Marines slew everything that came within the reach of their chain-axes. The ancient halls echoed with terrified screams for a day and night as the World Eaters rampaged through the citadel, and when Angron finally led his warriors from the charnel house, not a single soul remained alive within.

When the Ultramarines moved in to secure the citadel, they were horrified at what they discovered. The chambers and vaults of the citadel resembled a madman's abattoir, dismembered corpses lay where they had fallen and the stench of death was an almost physical thing. No-one had been spared, every living thing had been butchered in the World Eaters' fury. By the time the appalled Ultramarines left the citadel, the World Eaters and the Luna Wolves had already departed, leaving the Ultramarines to garrison Ariggata until the Imperial Army arrived. Before Guilliman was able to confront his brother Primarchs regarding the massacre on Ariggata, the Heresy erupted, both Horus and Angron spitting on their oaths of loyalty to the Emperor, and Guilliman's worst fears were confirmed.

Gene-seed

After countless millennia raiding from the Eye of Terror, the gene-seed of the World Eaters has been contaminated beyond redemption. Many suspect that Angron's gene-seed was corrupt from the start and the World Eaters were damned the moment they were created. Others point to the known history of Angron and insist that his Legion could have been saved had the signs been noticed earlier. Whichever is correct, the Space Marines of the World Eaters have a physical need to shed blood and kill, a driving imperative that sends them into a berserk fury of unrestrained bloodthirsty psychosis. So strong is the desire to kill that the World Eaters will turn on one another to satisfy their bloodlust should no other foe present itself.

Battlecry

"Blood for the Blood God!"

KHÂRN THE BETRAYER

Equally cursed and revered amongst the World Eaters, the name of Khârn stands as a legend amongst those who would kill in the name of the Blood God. Khârn was to earn the title Betrayer on the daemon world of Skalathrax with a supreme act of slaughter. Here the Legion was finally sundered when the World Eaters clashed with the Emperor's Children through the planet's storm-lashed cities of black rock and ice. City after city fell to the berserk assaults of the World Eaters, blood pouring through the streets as fire and lightning split the sky. As the battle continued to rage, the freezing Skalathrax night began to draw in, bringing certain death to all those not in shelter. Time and time again, the chosen of Khorne hurled themselves at the Emperor's Children, slaughtering the hated foe until forced to halt their attack as darkness fell.

Freezing storms scoured the canyons of the city bare of life, both forces sheltering from the deadly man-killing cold. A champion named Khârn screamed his frustration to the skies as the Legion paused in its attack, demanding that he be allowed to continue the killing. Furious with his fellow warriors for sheltering while there were foes yet to slay, Khârn took up a flamer and turned its incandescent death on his fellow Berzerkers, and those who tried to stop him he cut down with his shrieking chain axe. He strode through the burning city, his blood spattered armor glowing with unnatural balefires as he burned friend and foe alike. As the flames spread to the rest of the city, the Legion tore itself apart, Berzerkers fighting each other and the Emperor's Children for what little shelter remained. Like an avenging angel of death, Khârn burned and hacked a bloody path through the flaming ruins of Skalathrax, the living incarnation of the Blood God himself. And from that day forth, the World Eaters were broken as a Legion, becoming scattered bands of berserk warriors, forever in search of death. Khârn now stalks the Eye of Terror, an avatar of blood-soaked butchery who has never tasted defeat, and only the most insane warriors dare to fight alongside him since few who do so ever survive.

USING A WORLD EATERS ARMY IN WARHAMMER 40,000

World Eaters use the following units from Codex Chaos Space Marines:

HQ	1 World Eaters Chaos Lord or Daemon Prince, 0-1 Bloodthirster
Elites	World Eaters Cult Terminators, Possessed World Eaters Chaos Marines, World Eaters Berzerkers.
Troops	Bloodletter Daemon Packs, World Eaters Berzerkers
Fast Attack	World Eaters Bikers, Juggernauts of Khorne, Flesh Hound Daemon Beast Packs
Heavy Support	World Eaters Dreadnought, 0-1 World Eaters Predator

A copy of Codex: Chaos Space Marines is necessary to field a World Eaters army. The following rules and Codex changes apply. Note that the entire army must be World Eaters, not just one or two squads.

Special Rules

• **Blood Frenzy:** All troops identified as World Eaters on the table above are affected by Blood Frenzy.

World Eaters must charge if there are enemy in range at the start of the Assault phase.

World Eaters never Fall Back, even voluntarily, and can never be pinned. They are assumed to automatically pass any Morale check.

If victorious in an assault, World Eaters must Sweeping Advance unless any models are equipped with Terminator armor or they won due to 'moral high ground'.

At the start of each Chaos Movement phase roll a D6 for each World Eaters unit or Independent Character to see if they are gripped so strongly by the frenzy that they rush towards the enemy. On a 1 or 2 they advance D6" towards the nearest enemy – ignoring all but impassable terrain. If mounted in a transport they will disembark before moving. Do not roll for vehicles or Dreadnoughts. However, when rolling for Fire Frenzy, World Eaters Dreadnoughts count a result of 1 or 2 as Blood Rage, not just a 1 as normal.

• If any World Eaters Terminators, Berzerkers, Bikers or Characters (and their retinues) are fielded in a unit of exactly eight models or a multiple of eight (because eight is the sacred number of Khorne) they may upgrade one of their number to Aspiring Champion status at no points cost. If the Lord's retinue benefits from this then the free Aspiring Champion will be an Icon Bearer.

• The only Mark of Chaos that may be selected for any World Eaters model is the Mark of Khorne and all World Eaters Independent Characters must be given the Mark of Khorne.

• One Berzerker squad (not Terminators!) selected as an Elite choice can be upgraded to Chosen of Khorne at a cost of +8 points per model. See below for details. A squad of Chosen must number 8 or 16 models in total.

• The only Chaos Vehicle Gift available to the World Eaters is Destroyer. All Chaos Vehicle Upgrades can be used.

Possessed World Eaters Space Marines

Possessed World Eaters Space Marine squads consist of renegades possessed by Khornate Daemons. Consequently the first power rolled is always assumed to be number 3 – Strong – and the other two powers are then rolled normally.

World Eaters Biker Squadron

The army may include World Eaters Bikers as Fast Attack choices. They cost 45 points per model and use the same profile as normal Chaos Bikers, but with the following changes. Because they are Berzerkers of Khorne, World Eaters Bikers get +1 Attack in addition to the usual +1 Attack for having scythes and blades.

Khornate Chain-axes

The close combat weapon of choice used by World Eaters is a massive chain-axe. Heavy and unbalanced, these are not finesse weapons but slaughtering tools. The close combat weapon carried by the World Eaters is automatically assumed to be of this type and Independent Characters with the Mark of Khorne may select it as a Gift of Khorne for 5 points.

Khornate chain-axes are so huge and are wielded with such ferocity that they can penetrate virtually any armor known and the only defense against them is to dodge out of the way. The highest armor save possible against a Khornate chain-axe is therefore 4+. Invulnerable saves are unaffected.

The Chosen of Khorne

The Chosen of Khorne is an elite guard made up of the most brutal and blood-soaked killers in a Legion of blood-soaked killers. They enter a frenzied rage in battle through which they feel no pain, merely the imperative to take skulls.

Ignore Injury: If a Chosen of Khorne model loses a wound roll a D6, on a 1-3 remove the model as normal, on a 4+ the injury is ignored and the model continues fighting. This ability cannot be used against weapons that inflict instant death or against close combat weapons that allow no save.

World Eaters Cult Terminators

Immense Strength: World Eaters Terminators always have +1 Strength.

Character: If a model is upgraded to be an Aspiring Champion they may be given the Mark of Khorne. This costs 5 points but does not increase their strength above 5. It does allow them to take gifts requiring the Mark, however.

Transport: World Eaters Terminator squads numbering no more than 5 models may select a Chaos Land Raider as a transport.

Points Cost: A World Eaters Cult Terminator costs 45 points.

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WARRIORS OF ULTRAMAR

The Ultramarines Space Marine Chapter

by Graham McNeill

Since the ancient times of the Great Crusade, the Ultramarines have fought at the forefront of the Emperor's armies. Highly disciplined and courageous warriors, the Ultramarines have remained true to the teachings of the holy Codex Astartes, the greatest work of their Primarch, Roboute Guilliman, for ten thousand years. Tales of their victories are told from their home world, Macragge, to the sacred halls of Terra. Whenever the enemies of Mankind threaten the Imperium, the Ultramarines stand ready to fight them.

Origins

Uniquely amongst the First Founding Legions, the history of the Ultramarines is relatively well documented, and there exists a wealth of information regarding the formation of this most illustrious Chapter. One of the greatest mysteries concerning the Primarchs of the Space Marine Legions are the circumstances of their sundering from the Emperor, and this has vexed scholars down through the millennia. There are many wild and fanciful theories, but none can fully explain how such a calamitous event could be allowed to transpire. While it is a mystery that will probably never be adequately solved, it is when Roboute Guilliman's discovery on Macragge is examined that Imperial scholars find perhaps the greatest clue to the true facts of the matter.

Macragge is a rocky, inhospitable world on the eastern fringe of the galaxy. Three-quarters of its surface is covered by bleak, mountainous uplands, the rest with glittering blue seas. Macragge had survived the worst catastrophes of the Age of Strife; its industries had remained intact, contact was maintained with nearby star systems, and spacecraft regularly traveled between them. The people of Macragge were ruled by two Kings, or Consuls, and their word was law. To break their laws was to invite severe retribution, but honest toil was rewarded and positions of power granted to those most capable. Life on Macragge was harsh and only the strongest survived to adulthood. The state determined whether children, both male and female, were strong when they were born and weakling infants were left on the mountains to perish.

To be a citizen of Macragge was to live a life of discipline, self-denial and simplicity. The people viewed themselves as the true inheritors of Humanity's best traditions, shunning luxuries and occasion for leisure. Reliance on technological advancement was seen as bringing discord, weakness and a decline in moral values. This exercised a profound pull on the surrounding systems which admired the discipline and order of Macragge. To maintain this way of life, children of both sexes were sent to military and athletic academies at the age of six where they were taught to fight, build their stamina, maintain discipline, endure extremes of pain and survive in the wild. Life for the students was brutal, and only the very best survived. At fourteen, after eight years of the toughest training imaginable, those students became soldiers.

This punishing regime ensured that the military might of Macragge was second to none, and many of the surrounding systems adopted the same method of training. While the rest of the galaxy threatened to plunge back into the anarchy of the Age of Strife, Macragge and her neighbors prospered, disciplined armies of highly trained warriors hurling back alien invaders, pirates and human renegades time and time again. A soldier served until he or she reached the age of thirty, when they were allowed to leave the military and start a family of their own. However, despite the overwhelming military successes off-planet, areas of Macragge remained untamed and wild, with bandits and brigands raiding from the barbarous lands of Illynum in the north. Konor, the mightiest Battle King of Macragge, had led armies against the northern barbarians, but even he had never managed to pacify the region for any length of time.

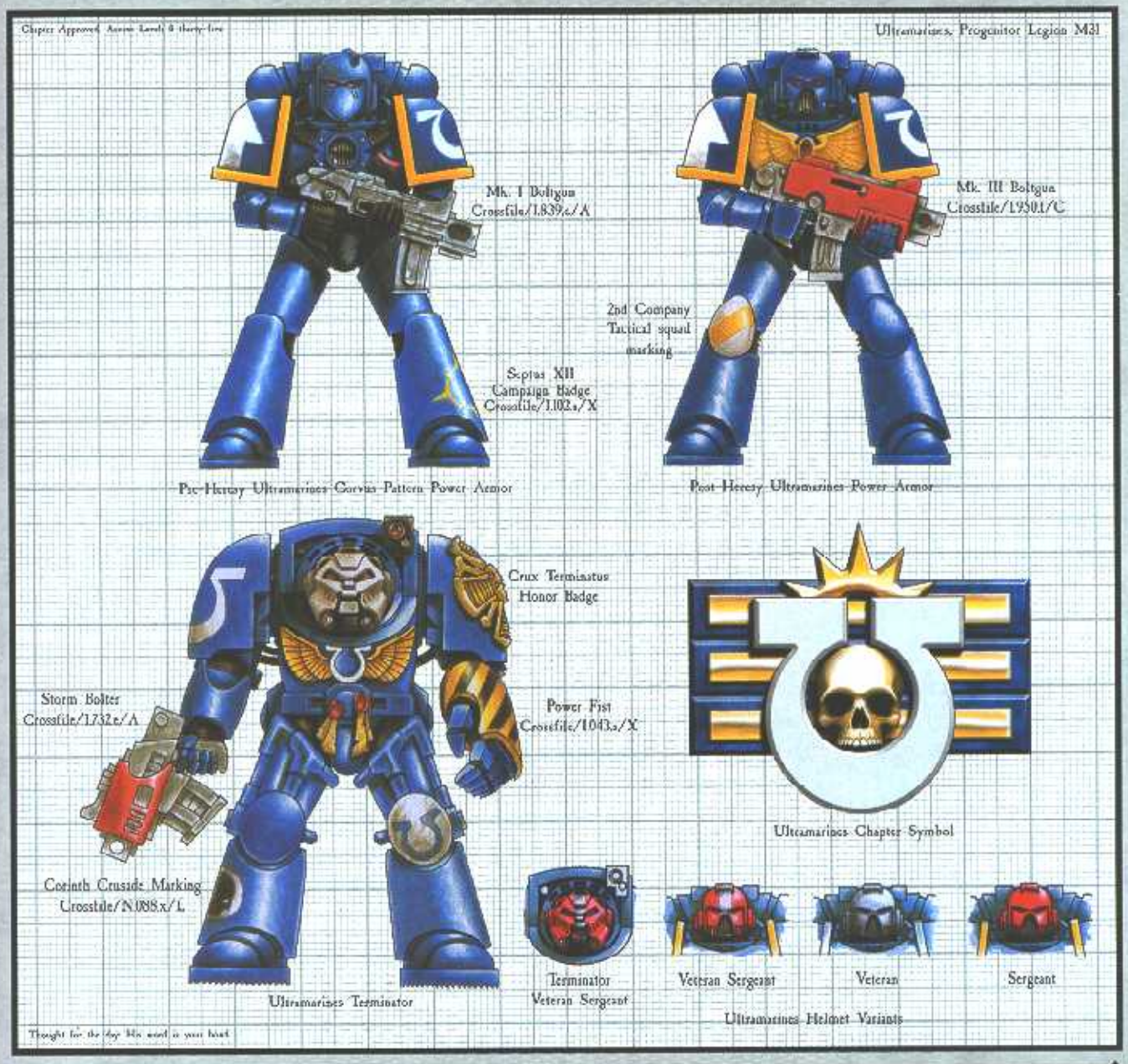
The coming of Roboute Guilliman was a time of great omen for the people of Macragge. Scribes recorded many strange sights and a passage in Konor's journals offers a significant clue to the mystery surrounding the Space Marine Primarchs. These writings have been preserved by the Librarians of the Ultramarines and its words have enlightened and divided Imperial historians in equal measure.

"Such dreams as might make a man believe he had lost his mind, or worse, fallen prey to a daemon, beset me nightly. It has been three months since I spent a night not woken from sleep by a scream so terrible I scarce believe it to be my own. Every night, dark terrors of fang and claw seek to rend my

flesh and feast on my soul. The physicians prepare me infusions of Lassiam root, but they do not help. Until tonight I felt like I should go mad. But as I dreamed of dark monsters that longed to suck the marrow from my bones, I beheld an armored figure in a molded breastplate of iron, embossed with an eagle and polished so that it shone like silver. A close fitting helm of bronze obscured the warrior's face and he stood with a wide-bladed sword that crackled with powerful energies. The dark beasts swarmed around him, but he smote them with his mighty weapon and, as each creature fell, it howled and vanished from sight. As the last beast was slain, the warrior turned to me and I suddenly found myself beside Hera's Falls in the Valley of Laponis. Spray from the mighty waterfall drenched me and I saw a golden haired child on the ground. The warrior bade me protect the child and as I reached to gather the babe in my arms, I woke, feeling more refreshed than I have in months. Dream or vision? I do not know, but I awoke with a fine mist of fresh mountain water on my face."

According to legend, the Valley of Laponis was the site of the crowning of the first Battle King of Macragge and, the following day, Konor rode east at the head of his bodyguard to Hera's Falls. Weeks later, the king's expedition eventually crested the impenetrable, snow-capped peaks and reached the vast falls, glacial water thundering to the rocks tens of thousands of feet below. Here, wrapped in swaddling clothes, they discovered the child that Konor had seen in his vision. How the child came to be in this isolated valley was a mystery that would never be solved, but it was seen as a great omen that the child should be found in a place of such historical significance. Konor took the babe back to his palace and named him Roboute, which means 'Great One'.

Roboute grew quickly, as did his capacity for learning, and within the space of a few years he had mastered everything the wisest men of Macragge could teach him. At the age of six, as was the custom for children of Macragge, he was taken from his father and inducted into the Agiselus Barracks where he mastered the art of war with breathtaking speed. His grasp of philosophy, history and science was greater than anyone alive, yet his true genius lay in the field of military organization. After two years it became



farcical for Roboute to remain at the training barracks as he was already the mightiest warrior on Macragge. He could best every one of his instructors in hand to hand combat and none could out-think his battlefield stratagems.

As Roboute took his place within the military, Macragge itself was in a state of change. Konor was a well-liked ruler, yet his fellow Consul, a vain and jealous man named Gallan, plotted against him. In these times of prosperity, Gallan and a powerful group of the wealthy elite of Macragge had grown fat off the labor of slaves and vigorously opposed Konor's proposed reforms that would oblige them to provide their slaves with reasonable food and accommodation. Konor also pushed through legislation that forced the wealthy to contribute to his ambitious program to enlarge and improve the capital city. His reforms were of great benefit to the people of Macragge, but Gallan and his supporters were fearful of losing their wealth and power. Such was Roboute's fearsome reputation, Gallan knew that he could not strike while Konor's son was still in the capital, and secretly arranged to have him removed from the city. Spreading gold amongst the Illyrium tribes, Gallan had the tribesmen launch a series of bloody raids against the northern communities of Macragge. He then counseled Konor that the pacification of these tribes would be the perfect task for Roboute. Konor readily agreed; he had been seeking a task worthy of his son, and he believed that this was the perfect opportunity for him to prove his readiness for command.

Roboute marched north into the untamed lands of Illyrium and launched a brilliant campaign against the tribesmen. His genius for military strategy and organization was nothing short of legendary, and within two months his expeditionary force had not only pacified the entire region but had earned the respect of the fierce tribesmen. Roboute became blood brother to Bardylis, head man of the strongest tribe, after sparing his life in battle and accepted oaths of loyalty from the leaders of every other tribe at the Gathering of Paonia. Bardylis then told Roboute of the gold that had come north from Gallan and begun the bloodshed. Roboute immediately gathered his men to march south to the capital but, as they came within sight of the city, they saw thick pillars of black smoke and the flickering glow of many fires.

Roboute led his army towards the gates, advancing through hordes of citizens fleeing from the terror within. The city was in anarchy, drunken soldiers looting and killing at random, and fires raging unchecked. Roboute marched to the Senate house, executing any looters he came across, and formed work details to fight the fires that threatened to engulf the city. A hundred soldiers in the pay of Gallan blocked the gates of the Senate house, but Roboute butchered them and forced his way inside. Leaving his troops to deal with the drunken mob, he fought his way through the Senate building to find Konor lying near death, an assassin's blade lodged in his heart. With his dying breath, Konor told his son of Gallan's betrayal and implored him to continue his works. The physicians did what they could for the Battle King, but the wound was poisoned and they could do nothing to save him. Roboute's thoughts filled with vengeance as he began the task of restoring order within the city. Those

soldiers who had remained faithful to Konor were besieged within their barracks, but when word reached them of Roboute's return, they broke out and linked with other forces loyal to the Battle King.

With Roboute at their head, the rebels were soon crushed and not a single man was spared the Primarch's wrath. Gallan had fled the planet, but Roboute hunted him down and dragged him back to Macragge in chains, personally beheading him with Konor's sword. By popular demand, Roboute assumed the mantle of Battle King of Macragge and he worked swiftly to destroy those who had betrayed his father, executing them and seizing their lands and titles. He distributed these amongst his loyal supporters and set about continuing his father's works. A year later, the rebellion was forgotten and Macragge flourished like never before. Soon Macragge had been almost completely rebuilt with wondrous structures of smooth marble, steel and glass. The people prospered and wanted for nothing. Disciplined, well-equipped armies from Macragge kept the King's peace, and starships traveled regularly between neighboring systems. It was, in all respects, a perfect model of human society, and when the Emperor learned of this utopian civilization he took ship for Macragge to meet its legendary King.

The *Speculum Historiale* records the meeting of the Emperor and Roboute Guilliman in great (and often unnecessary) detail, and many historians cite this as proof that the Emperor had set Roboute Guilliman on Macragge deliberately. The Emperor met Roboute wearing a polished silver breastplate with an eagle at its center and an all-enclosing bronze helm. He carried a glowing power sword and welcomed Roboute as an equal. Roboute instantly recognized the Emperor from the description in his father's journal and knew that he had at last met his true father. The Emperor was astounded by the prosperity and strength of this world and immediately assigned the forward base of the Ultramarines Legion to Macragge. The Ultramarines had been created from Roboute's genetic template, and they established their base high in the Laponis Valley, beginning construction of a mighty fortress on the exact spot of Roboute's discovery.

The Primarch soon assimilated the wonders of the Imperium and readily took command of the Ultramarines Legion. As ever, his greatest talents lay in the art of war, and he led the Ultramarines to victory after victory, further expanding the Emperor's realm. He liberated countless worlds from the domination of aliens and foul Chaos renegades, but where some of his brother Primarchs left a trail of death and destruction in their wake, Roboute brought peace and fresh prosperity. Every world the Ultramarines liberated rapidly took its place amongst those loyal to the Imperium, and Guilliman's genius for planning campaigns ensured that the planet's population and industry suffered the minimum amount of collateral damage. On Macragge, the Fortress of Hera took shape, a building of such magnificent proportions that it defied the human mind with its grandeur. Upon its completion, those Ultramarines who had remained behind to oversee its construction began recruiting from Macragge and the surrounding systems. The training academies provided many fine candidates for the Legion and soon the Ultramarines received the first influx of warriors born and bred on Macragge. The surrounding systems also provided warriors for the Legion and, before long, the Ultramarines were the largest Legion in existence.

When Horus turned against the Emperor and led the galaxy into the most destructive civil war it had ever seen, the Ultramarines were engaged deep in the galactic south. Their very successes had carried them far from Horus' armies in the north-east and Guilliman did not receive word of the betrayal until the battle for Terra was under way. Gathering his Legion, Guilliman led his forces towards Terra, en route destroying a rebel fleet on its way to reinforce Horus. The war had been won by the time Guilliman's warriors reached Terra, but the Imperium was in turmoil. Half the Space Marine Legions had sided with Horus and the remaining loyalist Legions had been badly mauled in the fighting. There were desperately few Space Marines, and never were they more needed. The enemies of

ANCIENT GALATAN, BEARER OF THE BANNER OF MACRAGGE

During the seven year Corinthian Crusade in 698.M41, over fifty Imperial Guard regiments and detachments from six Chapters of the Adeptus Astartes took part in the fighting to liberate the Corinth system from the domination of the Ork Warlord Skargor the Despoiler. In the final stages of the crusade, the forces of Skargor had been pushed back to Corinth itself and the Orks had not been idle in augmenting its already fearsome defenses. A heavy price in blood was sure to be exacted in its recapture.

The Ultramarines were chosen to plan the siege and within three months, Imperial forces had destroyed the outer defenses and Imperial Guard artillery pieces began shelling Corinth's main citadel. When a practicable breach had been established in the wall, a force led by Ancient Galatan, the bearer of the Banner of Macragge, launched the final assault. Warlord Skargor himself led the defense of the breach, knowing that, win or lose, the battle would soon be over. The fighting raged in the kilometer-wide breach for nine days, with thousands of casualties on both sides. Each time the Imperial forces wavered, Galatan would raise the banner high and demand all men of valour to fight on. Inch by inch, the attackers climbed until, as the sun set in blood on the ninth day, Skargor and Galatan met in single combat in the midst of the breach.

The Warlord was enormous, even for an Ork, and his strength was easily the equal of a Space Marine. The Greenskin's massive power claw severed Galatan's right arm and the Ultramarines roared in fury as they saw the banner drop. The Warlord reached down to snap the banner pole, the crackling energies of the claw corruscating along its length. But this was an icon touched by the Emperor's own hand and the Warlord could not break it. Ancient Galatan reared up behind Skargor, driving his power sword through the Ork's head and, seizing the banner in his remaining hand, raised it high once more. Again he led the charge up the breach, his superhuman powers of endurance carrying him ever onwards. Thrice more was he wounded, but his strength of will would not let him fall until the battle was won. As Imperial forces finally took the breach and millions of soldiers poured into the city, Galatan planted the banner atop the breach, slid slowly down the pole and allowed himself to die.

Mankind, sensing the weakness of the Imperium, prepared to attack, but Roboute Guilliman vowed that the Emperor's realm would not fall and took it upon himself to hold it together. He dispatched his Legion throughout the galaxy to stem the tide of invasion and unrest, holding the fragile Imperium together through a time of great danger. Macragge provided recruits as fast as it could, and soon the Ultramarines accounted for more than half of the Space Marines in the field. After almost a decade of total war, stability was restored to the galaxy and the philosophies of the Ultramarines' way of war had permeated almost every Legion. Under Guilliman's guidance, the holy Codex Astartes was taking shape and its doctrines would shape every future Space Marine force and lay the foundations for the Imperium's conventional military might.

The Codex Astartes laid down the tactical doctrines of the Imperium's fighting forces and was to grow and evolve over the millennia into a massive tome that detailed everything from battlefield stratagems to uniform markings for various squad types. The most immediate change was the decree that each Legion would be split into smaller units known as Chapters. One Chapter would keep the name and heraldry of the original Legion, whilst the remainder would take a new name and iconography. No longer would the power of an entire Space Marine Legion rest in one man's hands. Some Legions resisted this change and refused Guilliman's orders, but when the matter threatened to erupt into a new and bloodier civil war, they eventually relented. Most of the original Legions split into five or less Chapters, but the exact number created from the Ultramarines is uncertain. According to the oldest known copy of the Codex Astartes, the so-called Apocrypha of Skaros, the Ultramarines were split into twenty-three Chapters, but it does not name them all.

Roboute Guilliman continued to lead the Ultramarines for the next hundred years until he and his warriors fought against the traitor Primarch, Fulgrim, and the Emperor's Children on the world of Thessala. Fulgrim had changed beyond all recognition. The noble man he had once been had died long ago upon his elevation to a Daemon Prince of Slaaneeh and now he was corrupt beyond words. His serpentine body was multi-armed and each taloned fist carried an envenomed rapier. Billowing clouds of heady musk enveloped the Primarchs as they met in single combat on the red fields of Thessala. None who were present on that day can say for sure what happened, yet when the cloying musks cleared, the Emperor's Children were gone and Roboute Guilliman lay unmoving, a single bright slash of blood across his throat. Not even the Primarch's god-like physique could halt the spread of Fulgrim's poison and, as Guilliman died, the Apothecaries set up a stasis field and transported their leader back to Macragge. To this day, Roboute Guilliman remains entombed within the stasis field, held immobile on his marble throne in the Temple of Correction on Macragge. There are those who claim that the Primarch's wounds are healing, but this is clearly impossible within the time-locked bubble of a stasis field. Despite this self-evident fact, many believe such tales and await the time when Guilliman will be fully recovered.

Home World

The home worlds of the Ultramarines are situated deep in the galactic south-east in the Ultima Segmentum. Whereas most Chapters have their fortress monastery on a single world, the Ultramarines control no fewer than eight nearby systems.

Collectively these are known as Ultramar and, while each has its own government, armed forces and individual cultures, all look to the Ultramarines and Macragge for leadership.

The worlds surrounding Macragge are largely industrial in nature, and under Roboute Guilliman's guidance these worlds were revolutionized into prosperous, productive planets where honest toil and virtue are rewarded. The inhabitants of these worlds are industrious, disciplined and intensely loyal to the Ultramarines.

When looking to their defense, each world maintains its own dedicated armies, but can also call upon the protection of the Ultramarines. They are not required to levy troops for the Imperial Guard, but such is the prosperity and disciplined nature of Ultramar that hundreds of regiments stand ready to fight throughout the galaxy. As well as their own defense, the worlds of Ultramar provide recruits for the Ultramarines and it is a source of fierce pride when a family can point to an ancestor who became a Space Marine.

In the glory days of the Great Crusade, the worlds surrounding Macragge provided the Ultramarines with hundreds of new recruits, raw materials and supplies. This tradition has continued to the present day and strong ties have been maintained between Macragge and its surrounding planets. Given the close-knit structure of Ultramar, it is not surprising that many of its worlds share a commonality of language, culture, architecture and governmental styles.

Macragge is a rocky world, protected by numerous orbital batteries and two vast polar defense grids. It is here, in the harsh and unforgiving mountains, that the Ultramarines built the Fortress of Hera, housing the shrine of the Primarch himself within the Temple of Correction. Here the Primarch's body is held within a stasis field and the Temple is a place of great pilgrimage for many loyal citizens of the Imperium.

Talassar is a turbulent planet of tempests and violent seas, with but a single continent named Glaudor. In contrast, the three worlds of Quintarn, Tarentus and Masali orbit a common center of gravity and, outside the huge, enclosed agri-cities, the land is desolate and arid. Wind traps collect water for domed cities that protect verdant greenery and hundreds of square miles of agricultural land. Calth's populace lives underground, far from the deadly rays of its blue sun, long ago seeded with poisons by the Word Bearers Traitor Legion. Vast underground caverns honeycomb the planet's crust and, though the planet is self-sufficient, like all others in Ultramar, a great deal of food is shipped in from nearby Iax. The planet's shipyards are justly famous and construct a sizeable proportion of the ships in the Ultramarines fleet as well as those used by other arms of the Imperium.

Both Iax and Espandor are sparsely populated worlds towards the edge of Ultramar. Iax is an agri-world and one of the most productive worlds in the Imperium, while Espandor is primarily composed of forests and rumored to have been settled when traders were blown off course by a warp storm during the Age of Strife. The crowning glory of Ultramar was once Prandium, and its natural beauty was famed throughout the Imperium, but the planet is now a barren, lifeless rock, stripped bare two hundred and fifty years ago by the rapacious Tyranids of Hive Fleet Behemoth.

"Never before have I seen such heroism than in the breach at Corinth. Heroes were made that day, and none more glorious than Ancient Galatan, bearer of the Battle Standard of Macragge, may his name be remembered for a thousand times a thousand years. Privileged was I to be amongst those who bore his sacred body back to Macragge, where his name honors the Wall of the Dead in the Temple of Correction. We shall not see his like again."

Captain Idaeus, Ultramarines 4th Company.

Combat Doctrine

As befits the Chapter of Roboute Guilliman, the Ultramarines adhere rigidly to the tenets laid down in the Codex Astartes. For ten thousand years they have fought in the manner described in its holy pages. Other Chapters may freely interpret the words of Guilliman but, to the Ultramarines, such deviation is unthinkable. The Codex Astartes is a work of divine wisdom, sanctified by the Emperor himself, and the Ultramarines see no reason to deviate from its wisdom. The life-long lessons of discipline and self-reliance that are taught to the people of Ultramar from birth give them the strength of character to hold true to teachings over ten thousand years old.

For any given tactical situation, the Codex has hundreds of pages devoted to how it may be met and overcome. Each warrior of the Chapter is required to memorize whole sections of the Codex so that within a Company there exists an entire record of the Codex's tenets. The wisdom of thousands of Imperial warriors have contributed to the Codex, and details on everything from unit markings to launching a full scale planetary assault are contained within its pages.

Organization

Following the break-up of the Space Marine Legions into smaller fighting forces, Guilliman laid down the organizational dictates that would become a part of every Chapter from then on. Though some would later stray from the precise structure laid out in the Codex, most Chapters remain faithful to its teachings. The Ultramarines are split into ten companies, each a hundred Space Marines strong and led by a Captain. The 1st Company consists of battle-hardened veterans and is, invariably, the most powerful. It is also the only Company capable of fielding warriors clad in Terminator armor. Following its complete destruction at the claws of Hive Fleet Behemoth, the Ultramarines 1st Company has slowly rebuilt its strength and only now, two hundred and fifty years later, has returned to full strength.

Companies 2 to 5 are the Battle Companies and these are composed of a mix of Tactical, Assault and Devastator squads. Each Battle Company is a self-sufficient battlefield unit, capable of meeting any threat and defeating it. These form the backbone of the Chapter and bear the brunt of the fighting. Companies 6 through to 9 are the reserve Companies and each one comprises of squads of one particular type. Companies 6 and 7 are Tactical companies, 8 is the Assault Company and 9 the Devastator company. The 10th Company is made up of Scout squads and the Chapter's newest recruits. These divisions were decided upon ten thousand years ago by Roboute Guilliman and have served the Chapter well since that day.

THE TAKING OF BRIDGE TWO-FOUR

In 999.M41. the taint of Chaos was detected on the world of Thracia by Inquisitor Apollyon, and Imperial forces rapidly moved to meet the threat. Over half the Planetary Defense Force had been corrupted and, worse still, there were reports that indicated the presence of Night Lords Chaos Space Marines. Imperial forces drove the poorly armed traitors before them until they were in position to launch a full offensive against the capital city of Mercia. Before the assault could be launched, six bridges on the Imperial right flank needed to be destroyed in order to prevent the Emperor's forces from being attacked in the rear. These bridges were believed to be held by under-strength PDF units, and detachments of Ultramarines were deployed via Thunderhawk gunships to capture and destroy each bridge with melta charges.

Captain Idaeus of the 4th Company led the attack on bridge two-four and, after a brief fire fight, the bridge was captured. As Techmarines rigged the bridge for detonation, shells began dropping in the midst of the Space Marines as a massive Chaos counter-attack thrust towards the bridge. The main Imperial attack had been anticipated by the Night Lords and now a considerable force was attacking the Ultramarines' position. The right flank of the Imperial army was exposed and Idaeus knew that he must not allow the forces of Chaos to cross. He pulled his men back across the bridge and signalled to the Thunderhawk as he prepared to detonate the breaching charges. The Ultramarines fell back in good order but, before the bridge could be destroyed, the Techmarine carrying the detonators was obliterated by a direct hit from an artillery shell. As the Thunderhawk swept in behind the Ultramarines position, concealed Hydra flak tanks blew it from the sky in a hail of high explosive rounds.

The Ultramarines occupied the bunker and gun nests at the end of the bridge and prepared to hold their position to the last man. Idaeus voxed a warning to the Imperial army and ordered another Thunderhawk to extract his men. For the rest of the night, the servants of Chaos assaulted across the bridge and each time were repulsed by disciplined waves of bolter fire. Idaeus knew that they could not hold the bridge much longer and dispatched a raiding party to attempt to detonate the explosives manually. The attempt ended in failure and none of these men were seen again until dawn. As the sun rose, Rhino APCs in the colors of the Night Lords pushed across the debris-strewn bridge. Ultramarines prisoners taken during the night were nailed to the hulls, their rib cages cracked open and spread wide. The attack was defeated, but there was no doubt there would be many more before the day was out.

This is not the place to speak of the horrors the Night Lords visited upon the Ultramarines, but the traitor Space Marines utilized all manner of despicable tactics in order to undermine the discipline of the Ultramarines and break their resistance. Less than a fifth of the Ultramarines who had begun the operation were still alive and Idaeus knew that one more push would see them defeated. He ignored the advice of his officers and set off alone in a suicidal attempt to blow the bridge himself. Idaeus managed to reach the first of the charges as the second Thunderhawk roared overhead, landing out of range of the enemy anti-aircraft tanks. Idaeus ordered the remaining Ultramarines to retreat under the command of Veteran Sergeant Uriel Ventris as the Night Lords began yet another assault. The surviving Ultramarines withdrew under fire to the Thunderhawk and Idaeus waited until the last possible second before detonating the first charge. In a lethal chain reaction, the remaining charges exploded and destroyed Idaeus and the bridge in a searing blast. The Chaos attack across bridge two-four had been thwarted, and within two months, the planet had been brought under Imperial control once more.

Beliefs

The harsh life on Macragge breeds hardy people with strong martial values and hard-working natures. Discipline, self-reliance and honor are seen as cardinal virtues and the children of Ultramar are taught these values from the earliest age. These are reinforced in the training academies and, by the time students graduate, they are amongst the most disciplined humans

USING ULTRAMARINES TYRANID HUNTERS IN WARHAMMER 40,000

by David Gausebeck

Perhaps more than any other Space Marines Chapter, the Ultramarines know the magnitude of the Tyranid threat. As they also have the most experience fighting the Tyranids, they were able to develop a response to the menace. This response is the Tyranid Hunter squad. When formed, these squads take the place of Tactical Squads in the reserve companies, so that they can be called upon as needed. Composed as much as possible from veterans of the fighting on Macragge and Ichar IV, Tyranid Hunter squads are additionally trained with all available data on Tyranid anatomy and tactics. In short, they know how the Tyranids fight and how to hurt them. Tyranid Hunters are also specially equipped for their role. Each squad has use of an auspex to detect them in hiding. Tyranid Hunter squads also carry somewhat different armament than Tactical squads, using weapons that can cut through swarms of smaller Tyranid creatures as well as weapons that can crack the armor of the bigger aliens.

0-1 ELITES – TYRANID HUNTER SQUAD

	Points/Model	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Sv
Veteran Space Marine	18	4	4	4	4	1	4	1	9	3+
Veteran Sergeant	+15	4	4	4	4	1	4	2	9	3+

We are the inheritors of Roboute.
Let no rule be beyond us.
Let no man stand in our way.

Squad: The squad consists of one Space Marine Sergeant and between four and nine Space Marines.

Weapons: Bolters. The Sergeant is equipped with an auspex and may replace his bolter with a bolt pistol and close combat weapon at no extra points cost.

Options: Up to two Space Marines in the squad may be equipped with one of the following weapons each: storm bolter at +5 pts or flamer at +8 pts.

In addition, one Space Marine in the squad may be armed with: a heavy bolter at +5 pts; missile launcher at +10 pts; or a bolt pistol and power fist at +15 pts.

The entire squad may be given frag grenades at an additional cost of +1 pt per model.

The Sergeant may be upgraded to a Veteran Sergeant at an additional cost of +15 pts.

Transport Vehicle: The entire squad may be mounted in a Rhino at an additional cost of +50 pts, or a Razorback at an additional cost of +70 pts.

SPECIAL RULES

Know Your Foe: Ultramarines Tyranid Hunters are specially trained for combat against their chosen foe and can exploit vulnerabilities in Tyranid anatomy. To represent this, they may re-roll any failed roll to wound against a Tyranid model. This ability applies both while shooting and in close combat, but it does not apply to blast or template weapons.

Strategic Deployment: Ultramarines Tyranid Hunters can only be used against Tyranids.

In the galaxy. The people of Ultramar are taught to respect the might of the Imperium and that to strive in its name is the highest form of service a person can render to the Emperor. As such, the workers and warriors of Ultramar are respected throughout the galaxy and are a byword for strength, courage and honor.

In battle, the Ultramarines follow the teachings of Roboute Guilliman, fighting with all the strength and ferocity of their legendary Primarch. An ancient saying of the Battle Kings of Macragge was that a warrior should return from battle either carrying his shield or carried lifeless upon it, and this is as true today as it was then. No warrior of the Ultramarines would bring shame on the Chapter, and many are the deeds recorded by the Librarians of heroic feats of bravery undertaken to uphold its honor.

Gene-seed

The Horus Heresy highlighted weakness inherent in the gene-seed of several Space Marine Legions and this was exacerbated by the accelerated zygote harvesting techniques used to keep the Legions up to full strength. When the Legions were broken down into Chapters, a genetic repository was set up on Terra to store their gene-seed and monitor its purity. As the largest Space Marine Legion, the Ultramarines' contributions to this resource was greater than any other Legion and, as a result, their gene-seed became the stock type for many of the Second Founding Chapters.

Those Chapters created from the Ultramarines geneseed stored on Terra are known, collectively, as the Primogenitors or 'first born', and they also venerate Roboute Guilliman as their founding father.

The Ultramarines gene-seed is by far the purest stock and there are no known aberrations in its genetic structure. Every one of the esoteric organs utilized in the arduous creation of a Space Marine by the Ultramarines are fully functional, and it can truly be said of this Chapter that they are as perfect today as they were in the days of Guilliman himself.

Battlecry

"Courage and honor!"

Index Astartes
First Founding

An in-depth look at the First Founding Legions of the Adeptus Astartes

THE LOST AND THE DAMNED

The Death Guard Space Marine Legion

by Christopher Allen

The Death Guard Legion, the dread Plague Marines of Nurgle, has become a relentless and terrifying scourge upon the Imperium of Man. But it was not always so. Ten millennia ago, the Death Guard was one of the original twenty Space Marine Legions, united in the defense of Mankind under the command of the Emperor and their fearsome Primarch, Mortarion.

Origins

When the Emperor's twenty nascent Primarchs were scattered across the galaxy, the Stygian Scrolls tell of one who came to rest on a bleak moor, strewn with dead and scattered with the carnage of battle for leagues in every direction. The planet was Barbarus, perpetually shrouded in poisonous fog, whose mountainous crags were ruled by warlords with fantastic powers and horrific appetites, and whose human settlers, stranded there millennia before, were crowded into the lowest valleys, beneath the choking mists. They lived lives of unrelenting terror, eking out a peasant's existence by day beneath a dim sun which never burned completely through the fog, and cowering by firelight after dark from the terrible beings which moved unseen above.

The greatest of these overlords stood in triumph on the battlefield, reveling in his massacre until the silence was shattered by a child's cry. Legend tells that the warlord walked the sea of corpses for a day and a night in his creaking battle armor, drawn by the wail of the infant. For an instant, he considered ending its young life; but no mere human ought to be able to breathe the poisonous miasma of the heights of Barbarus, much less cry out as this child did. For long moments he contemplated the thing which appeared human but was clearly more; then he gathered up the infant and carried it from the carnage. For all his dark power, until that moment he had not had what this child now promised: a son and heir. Born of death, upon a field of death, the warlord christened the infant Mortarion: child of death.

His master tested the infant's limits. When he had determined precisely how high into the toxic clouds of Barbarus's peaks the child could survive, he erected a stony keep and fenced it behind black iron. Then he moved his own manse beyond, to the highest crag, where the atmosphere was deadly even to the nascent Primarch. Mortarion grew to adolescence in such a world, of citadels of weeping grey stone and cast-iron fences, where the very air was death, and the sun never more than a distant smudge. It was a world of constant war, against opposing lords who came with golem armies of stitched-together dead one day, then tormented shapeshifters, more monsters than men, the next. To survive, Mortarion learned at the foot of his overmaster, and learned voraciously, everything his master would teach him. Mortarion devoured it all: from battle doctrine to arcane secrets, from artifice to stratagem. He learned and he grew, shaped by his grim environs, but a child of the Emperor for all that – superhumanly resilient to the poisonous air around him and superhumanly strong even in the absence of sufficient sunlight or nourishment. Mortarion possessed an intellect which was highly keen and which asked questions his lord was not wont to answer.

Increasingly, the questions centered around the fragile things in the valleys below, which the warlords preyed upon for their corpses to reanimate, or victims to accurse. His master kept Mortarion as distant from the human settlements as he could, but his very act of denial fed the maturing Primarch's obsession. The day finally came when Mortarion would be denied no longer. Mortarion slipped through the dungeons from his keep. The last thing he heard was the voice of the overlord, the only father he had known, roaring in the miasmic darkness from the high battlements as Mortarion descended from the mountain, renouncing the Primarch for his betrayal, warning Mortarion that to return would mean death.

Descending beneath the mists was a revelation to Mortarion; his lungs were filled with air free of poisons for the first time. He smelled aromas of food being prepared, of crops freshly harvested, heard voices unmuffled by fog and, for the first time, heard laughter. The young Primarch realized that he was among his own kind, that the 'fragile prey' of the warlords were his own people. And with the realization came rage. He determined to bring them the justice denied them by the dark powers which moved above.

Mortarion's acceptance amongst the human settlers of Barbarus was no simple thing. However like them he felt

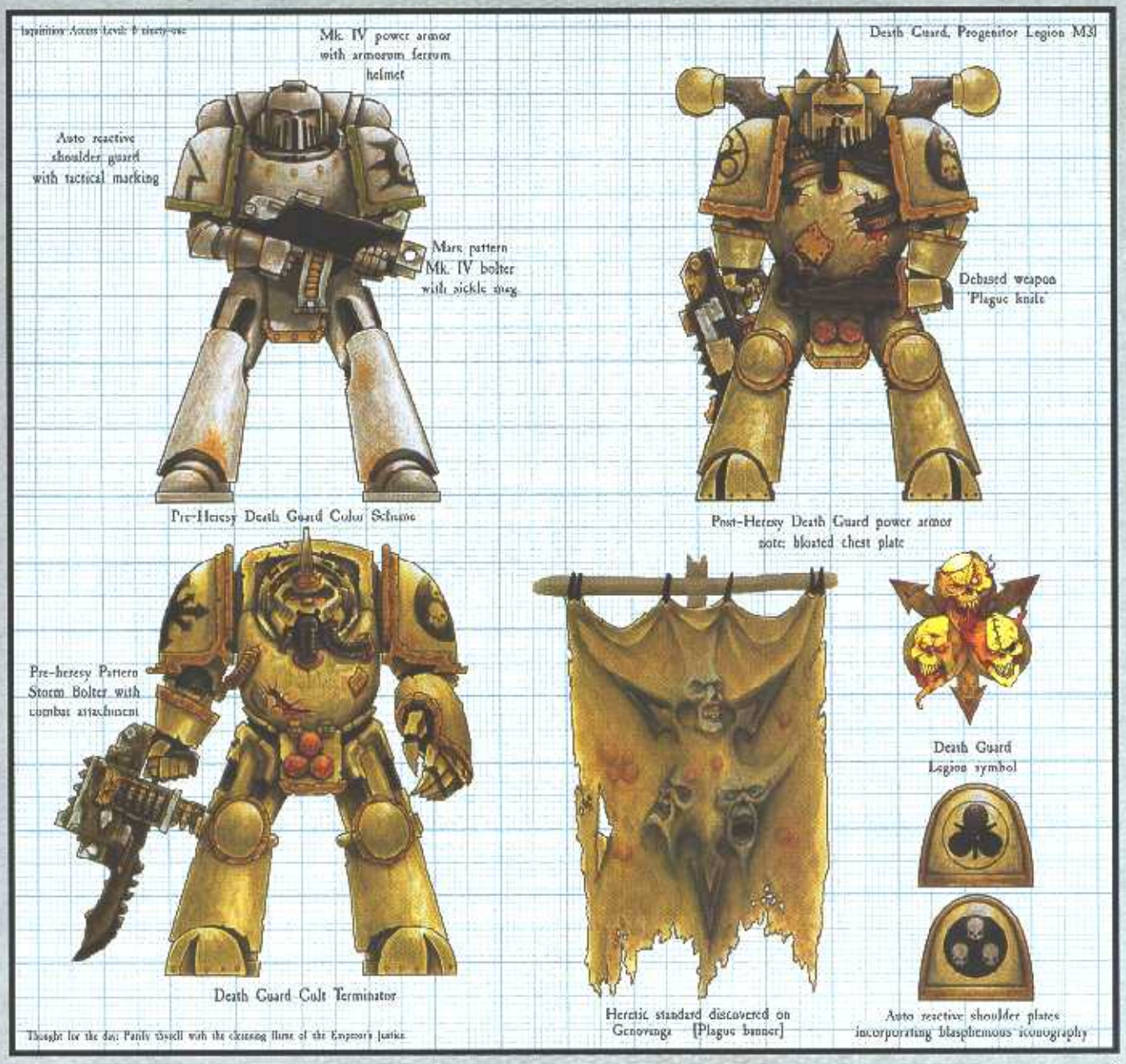
himself to be, to them he was little different from the monsters above. Towering over even the tallest of them, gaunt and pallid, with hollow, haunted eyes which betrayed the horrors he had seen, Mortarion terrified most of the settlers. They looked upon him with suspicion and fear. It stung the young Primarch, but he bided his time, using his great strength to work the fields for their meager harvest, knowing that his opportunity to prove himself would come. When it did in the twilight hours, he was ready.

From the darkness came shambling dark things. A lesser lord led his corpse-like thralls into the settlement, taking with silent, remorseless strength those they could carry off for their master's dark purpose. The peasants fought back as best they could, with torches and farmer's tools rendered into makeshift weapons. It was all they could do not to run, much less offer a meaningful fight. They had played out the futility of this scene their whole lives, and they knew how it would end. Until, that is, Mortarion strode into their midst. Towering over them with an enormous two-handed harvesting scythe, he charged into the ranks of the enemy with all his rage-born might, and drove them from the village. Their dark lord smiled at him as he neared, and withdrew into the poisonous heights where this rebellious human could never reach him. He was still wearing his contemptuous smile when Mortarion caught up with him on the mountainside and exacted his vengeance for the 'fragile prey' below.

After that night, Mortarion's place among the settlers was never in doubt.

As he matured, Mortarion taught the settlers of Barbarus what he knew of warfare. Word of his exploits spread, and many others made the perilous journey to learn. Slowly, villages became strongpoints, and the villagers more effective defenders. Eventually, Mortarion went amongst the people, travelling from settlement to settlement, teaching, building and, when occasion demanded, defending them. Always, however, his ultimate justice was denied; the dark powers could always retreat into the impregnable bulwark of their poisonous mists. His people could only fight in defense. That had to change.

Mortarion recruited the toughest, most


Inquisition Access Level: 9 ninety-one
Mk. IV power armor with armorum ferrum helmet
Death Guard, Progenitor Legion M31
Auto reactive shoulder guard with tactical marking
Mark pattern Mk. IV bolter with sickle mag
Debased weapon 'Plague knife'
Pre-Heresy Death Guard Color Scheme
Post-Heresy Death Guard power armor note: bloated chest plate
Pre-heresy Pattern Storm Bolter with combat attachment
Death Guard Legion symbol
Death Guard Cult Terminator
Heretic standard discovered on Genovenga [Plague banner]
Auto reactive shoulder plates incorporating blasphemous iconography
Thought for the day: Purify thyself with the cleansing flame of the Emperor's justice.

resilient of Barbarus' population, forming them into small units which he drilled himself, teaching them not only defense but also attack. He turned blacksmiths from toolworking to weaponsmaking when time allowed, and crafters to the shaping of armor. And, with the best artificers he could find, he bent his formidable intellect to the problem of the poisonous air.

Inquisitor Mendikoff's monograph, *Cataphract of Death,* relates the now-famous result. When next a warlord descended from above, and the villagers mounted a defense successful enough to drive his unholy army back, Mortarion and his retinue of warriors, masked with crude filtering hoses and breathing gear, advanced into the fog after them. For the first time in living memory the prey brought death into the realm of death, killing the warlord and massacring his army. Mortarion continually improved his warrior's breathing apparatus, and he and his Death Guard, as his retinue came to be known, campaigned ever higher into the dark powers' domain, encountering ever more virulent pestilence. The constant exposure to ever higher doses of toxins toughened his Death Guard, traits which proved transferable to each new iteration of the Death Guard, growing tougher as though emulating their champion himself.

Only the most toxic peaks were denied Mortarion and the Death Guard and they warred for months across the poisonous spine of Barbarus, until only one grim manse stood against them, one which Mortarion knew well. The concentration of death about it overcame his force, threatening even Mortarion himself, and so he withdrew. Upon his return, however, his world was destined to once again spin out of his control.

Mortarion and his brethren arrived to find the village alive unlike he had ever known it. On everyone's lips was word of the arrival of a stranger, a great benefactor who brought promise of salvation. The Primarch's mood darkened; this day of deliverance was one he had worked for all his life, and he found himself altogether unhappy to see it co-opted by the arrival of some newcomer of uncertain agenda.

Taletellers say Mortarion flattened the massive wooden door of the hall upon his entrance. Seated at banquet, he found the elders and a stranger who was their opposite in every imaginable way. Where they were gaunt and pale, he was robust, his flesh bronzed, his physique utterly perfect. The people greeted Mortarion's arrival expectantly. Despite the affect wrought upon him by Barbarus's poisons, the connection between the new benefactor and their defender was nevertheless plain to them all. As plain as father and son. However, Mortarion was oblivious to any connection. He greeted the stranger with barely masked hostility, which quickly turned to outright anger at the stranger's utter unflappability. The elders spoke of the new arrival's promise to unite the people of Barbarus within a great expanding brotherhood of humanity which could help them be rid of their persecution from above. Mortarion felt his moment of triumph slipping from him. Twisting the haft of his ever-present scythe until his knuckles whitened, he declared that he and his Death Guard needed no help to finish their quest for justice.

It is said that the benefactor quietly challenged the stormy young Primarch's assertion, pointing out the Death Guard's failure to reach the last high citadel, and then threw down a gauntlet. If Mortarion could defeat the high overlord alone, he would withdraw and leave Barbarus to its own means. But if he failed, they would join his Imperium of Man and Mortarion would swear total fealty and allegiance to him.

Over the protests of his Death Guard, he spun on his heel and struck out alone for the last manse standing against him, the keep of the overlord he had called father. If some part of him knew that even he could not survive the highest reaches of Barbarus, he did not acknowledge it. Mortarion climbed ever higher, driven by the inevitability of the imminent conflict with his once master, driven by his desire to bring final justice for the people of his world. However he was mostly motivated by a compulsion to prove himself to the stranger below.

The confrontation, when it finally came, was mercilessly brief. Mortarion, choking in air so toxic that the hoses of his protective breathing gear began to rot away, struggled to the very gates of the overlord's citadel, calling out his defiance. The last thing he saw as he fell to his knees, the world turning grey as he was overcome, was the Overlord of Barbarus coming for him, to fulfill the promise he had made generations

Corpses bloated with noxious gases spewed excremental fluids as the filth encrusted Land Raider crushed them beneath its rusted iron tracks, grinding their jellied bones to pulp. Explosions burst around the massive vehicle, filling the air with lethal fragments and scoring the necrotic surface of its armored hide. Hulking and deformed warriors kept pace with the plague tank, firing mucus covered bolters through the yellow fog as they advanced. The Imperial Fists defensive line was less than fifty meters away, the ground before it littered with the twisted, plague ridden carcasses of those unfortunate enough to have been touched by the dark powers.

The fog coiled about the Land Raider like a living thing, as though it moved on some vile business of its own. The white heat of lascannon fire speared through the sickly haze and struck the hull of the tank, blasting a deep wound in its fleshy exterior. The massive vehicle slewed around, but kept moving, spinning tracks churning scraps of rotten flesh and decayed limbs as it rumbled over the pathetic barricade their foes had erected. The ground shook as the vehicle crashed back to earth. The front ramp dropped and pestilential fumes gusted from within, like the breath of some vast, infected beast. Vomited from the belly of the armored beast, warriors spawned in a festering nightmare charged from the Land Raider, a foul miasma of contagion wreathing their helmets in smoky darkness. Almost three meters tall, the huge figures wore filth-ridden suits of Terminator armor, splashed with clusters of weeping boils and sores. Diseased lesions and foul organic matter oozed from cracks in the armor.

Brother Colathrax stalked through the fog of sweet corruption and hail of bolter shells, his plague sword licking out left and right. He cut and stabbed, slicing skin and pricking organs, but never killing outright, no, never that. For who was he to deprive his foes of the agonizing bliss of Father Nurgle's Rot? How sweet it was to watch those whom the false Emperor had made mighty descend into madness and decay, their once powerful bodies turning on them as plague reduced them to mindless, gibbering horrors of mutated flesh. They had set themselves up as gods and would now pay the price for that arrogance. A Space Marine Captain in blazing yellow armor stood before him, his sword raised in challenge and Colathrax smiled.

Colathrax batted aside the sword with his power fist, stabbing his suppurating weapon through his opponent's belly. The blade of the plague sword skewered the Space Marine in an upward arc, lifting him from his feet and hammering through the building behind. Blood pooled beneath the Space Marine's twitching body. The wound refused to close and he coughed bloody phlegm as he felt the meat of his body rotting at a terrifying rate, internal organs flooding with dead fluids and the flesh of his limbs sloughing from his bones inside his armor. His breath rasped as his lungs dissolved and his vision faded as his eyeballs liquefied, sliding down his face like glutinous tears. He tried to curse his killer, but his throat had ruptured and seconds later his brain was a fetid grey ooze dribbling from his sagging head.

Brother Colathrax inhaled the intoxicating aroma of his master's putrescent benediction and offered a short prayer to Father Nurgle. He wrenched his sword from the wall, allowing the sloshing suit of power armor to topple to the stinking ground. The disintegration of this world was almost complete and Colathrax could taste their victory on the foul wind that swept the battlefield. He pictured oceans of decaying flesh, infection rampant and plagues unnumbered. That would be their gift to the denizens of this mortal realm. Colathrax laughed at the thought as the fog closed in.

before. Then the mighty stranger stepped between them, defying the death-fog, and felling the overlord with a single blow of his gleaming sword.

Mortarion was true to his oath. When he recovered, he bent his knee to the stranger and swore himself and the Death Guard to his service. Only then did the Emperor of Man reveal himself as the young Primarch's true father, and the destiny such service would bring: command of the fourteenth Legion of the Adeptus Astartes, the Space Marines.

The Libram Primaris, or *Book of Primarchs*, tells how Mortarion brought the relentlessness, remorselessness and resilience of his personal Death Guard to the Legion built of his own genetic material, and how in turn they adopted his retinue's title as their own. The resulting prowess of the Death Guard was recognized from the moment Mortarion took command, but the young Primarch never settled in Imperial society outside of battle. Mortarion was a grim, driven Primarch, fixated on reckoning with the oppressors of the galaxy. The easy camaraderie of the other Primarchs was alien to him. The Shadow Journal of Bellerophan, Dark Angels Librarian, confides that, of them all, he found kindred spirits in only two: Night Haunter, the dread master of the Night Lords, and Horus, the Warmaster of the Imperium, the right hand of the Emperor. Horus above all others recognized the value of the Death Guard. He would often place Mortarion and his Legion in the center of his battleline, counting on the enemy's inability to oust them so that he could either lever his advance from the rock of Mortarion's immovable position, or use it as the anvil upon which the Imperial hammer, in the form of his Luna Wolves, or the Haunter's Night Lords, would break the foe. It was a mercilessly effective combination.

In the charismatic Warmaster, Mortarion found a mentor who seemed to understand his goals and appreciate his methods. So close did Mortarion appear to be to Horus, in fact, it is believed that at least two of the other Primarchs, Roboute Guilliman of the Ultramarines and the ever watchful, ever taciturn Corax of the Raven Guard, approached the Emperor with concerns about where the master of the Death Guard's loyalties lay. The story of his allegiance to the Emperor won through his own failure was by then well-known, and anyone with even a passing familiarity with Mortarion knew that the pallid Primarch chafed at it. The Emperor is said to have dismissed their concerns with a wave; loyalty to Horus was de facto loyalty to the Emperor.

On that matter, the Emperor could not have been more wrong...

The Betrayal

On the feral planet Davin, the Warmaster and his Legion, now named the Sons of Horus in his honor, had fallen to Chaos. Before they would leave, Horus would be utterly possessed, foreswearing allegiance to the Emperor for the cause of Chaos and his own advancement, and would draw the Primarchs and Battle Brothers of half the Imperium's Legions to his cause. Transcripts of the Council of Charon, convened after the Heresy to ascribe responsibility, suggest that, unlike some of the other Primarchs, Horus did not need to resort to ritual possession to win the Death Guard to his side. Horus promised that under his rule the old order would fall, and a new age would dawn, a just age with right

ensured by the mighty. Mortarion turned on the Imperium as he had turned on the overlords of Barbarus, and joined the rebellion which would forever sunder the Imperium – the Horus Heresy. What he did not know then was the price he would be called upon to pay.

Horus was a brilliant strategist; he knew that the heart of the Imperium was Terra, and from the very moment of his rebellion, Terra was his objective. In short order he had gathered sufficient strength to shatter the defenses of the Imperium and lay siege to the Imperial Palace itself. Mortarion was determined that the Death Guard would be there with him. With his entire fleet, he crossed into the Warp and straight into nightmare.

The Death Guard fleet was becalmed by an impenetrable warpstorm, its navigators neither able to guide them through it nor find safe passage into realspace. The fleet was reduced to drifting through the Immaterium, and while they were stilled the Destroyer came.

For Mortarion and the Space Marines of the Death Guard there was nothing so terrifying as the plague which made their legendary resilience meaningless. These were the warriors who the Imperium had sent to conquer worlds no other man could set foot upon, much less fight on and win. Pestilence, contagion, toxin and pollution; there was no environment so hostile which Mortarion and the Death Guard could not overcome, until the plague which raced through their fleet. It roiled in their guts, bloating and distending their once superhuman bodies, transforming them into horrible, pustulent grotesques. They were made corrupt within and sickening to behold without and they grew sicker and sicker, yet could not die, their own constitution becoming their worst enemy. What they endured was unimaginable yet none suffered more than Mortarion. For the Primarch, it was as though he were upon the mountaintop of Barbarus once more, surrendering to the poison, without the mercy of unconsciousness to claim him or the Emperor to come to his salvation.

Whether he perceived, in those terrible hours, the loss of what he had once stood for, and the damnation he had wrought upon himself and his Legion, only Mortarion will ever know. Unable to endure the suffering any longer, Mortarion offered into the Immaterium himself, his Legion and his very soul in exchange for deliverance. A presence in the Immaterium answered, as though it had been waiting all along. In the depths of the warp, the Great God Nurgle, Lord of Decay and Father of Disease, called that debt and accepted Mortarion and the Death Guard Legion as his own.

What emerged from the warp when the Death Guard fleet broke out bore little resemblance to what had entered. The gleaming white and grey armor of Imperial champions was no more, burst and shattered from the horrific bloating of infected bodies, scabbed with boils, putrescence and the filth of corruption. Their weapons and machinery of war were now powered by the sickly sorcery of Chaos, glowing with lambent green luminescence and oozing gangrenous pus. The name Death Guard itself would pass into secondary use, as the walking pestilence-carriers became a terrifying sight across the Imperium. To their victims, to their erstwhile allies, even to themselves, they had become the Plague Marines.

Horus was eventually defeated by the Emperor and Chaos was driven back across space, finding refuge in the weeping sore known as the Eye of Terror. Mortarion and his Death Guard retreated there as well, but not in disarray, as many of the other Legions did.

Even in damnation, the resilience of the Death Guard remained, and under the direction of their Master they withdrew into the Eye intact, Loyalist Space Marines and Imperial Guard regiments breaking upon them time and again.

Within, Mortarion claimed the world which would become known as the Plague Planet as his own; its location near the fabric of reality was ideal for launching new strikes into the Imperium and across the galaxy. He shaped it so satisfactorily and defended it with his Plague Marines so well that his patron, Nurgle the Unclean, elevated the Primarch to daemonhood and gave Mortarion what the Emperor had denied him, and what Horus had not been able to provide: a world of his own. Mortarion became the overlord of a world of poison, horror, and misery. He had come home.

Home World

Barbarus was a feral world which orbited near its dim yellow sun, creating a thick, miasmic atmosphere of toxic chemicals. The most virulent gases rose through Barbarus's perpetual cloud towards the heat of its star, making the world beneath a dismal place of night, unbroken by starlight and with short, shadowy days. An atmosphere breathable by humans existed only in the lowest elevations, on flat moors and in the valley basins of the jagged, stony mountains which spined the world. Beings immune to the toxic soup of the planet's higher atmospheres once existed on Barbarus, building great grey keeps in the mountain fastnesses. When humans came to Barbarus, the horrific conditions from which they had to eke out survival quickly reduced them to a pre-feudal state. The higher beings' incomprehensible powers, their ability to survive where men could not, and above all their hunger to prey upon, experiment with and accurse Humankind caused the settlers to ascribe to those beings a medieval supernaturalism. What manner of creatures these dark overlords were will never be known.

Since his elevation to daemonhood, Mortarion has, consciously or not, remade the Plague Planet very much in Barbarus's image. Its citizens cower in festering villages on the planet's surface, serving their supreme masters, Mortarion's champions and other daemonic chosen of Nurgle who reside in mighty fortress-citadels high above them. Diseased things which should be dead, yet are not, roam the landscape, and skeletal Mortarion rules over all, enthroned upon the highest peak of the world.

Combat Doctrine

Mortarion was well-educated, if narrowly. Matters of culture, history, philosophy were often alien to him, but on the subject of dealing death, he was a prodigy. Mortarion believed that victory came through sheer relentlessness, and communicated that ethic throughout the Death Guard. Their weapons and armor were rarely the most expertly artificed, certainly not the most beautifully-ornamented, but functioned without flaw. The Death Guard did not manoeuvre fancifully, or confound their opponents; they picked the best ground upon which to fight, then smashed their foes after they had broken themselves against the Death Guard line. There was no environment which Mortarion and the Death Guard feared. What Mortarion and his adepts could not devise means to compensate for, the Death Guard overcame through sheer resilience.

Mortarion learned battle in a theatre of rocky mountainous terrain, without benefit of machinery. Though his considerable intellect allowed him to grasp the value of such support when his elevation to Primarch of a Space Marine Legion made such things as tanks and transport available, the primacy of the foot soldier remained ever the trademark of the Death Guard. Mortarion preferred to utilize huge waves of infantry, well-equipped and highly-trained on an individual level. He demanded that they be able to function and fight in almost any kind of atmosphere, and gave little emphasis on specialized units using jump packs or bikes. In fact, the Death Guard did not have dedicated Assault and Tactical squads as such; all his Space Marines were expected by Mortarion to be equally adept with bolter, pistol and close combat weapon, to fight with whatever weapon circumstance dictated. Such doctrine lent itself well to the use of Tactical Dreadnought armor, and the Death Guard regularly used Terminators before the Heresy. The Death Guard were particularly renowned for their success at such high-risk missions as space hulk clearance and the Plague Marines continue that success, using hulks to spread disease, infection and the cult of Nurgle throughout the body of the Imperium. The combat doctrine which served the Death Guard so well in life now suits the damned character of the Plague Marines to perfection.

Organization

Mortarion was an infantryman, and the Death Guard were organized around the principle of equipping the individual Space Marine as well as possible. Obedience was extended through every rank: sergeants were extensions of their captains, who were extensions of Mortarion himself. If there were any of the original Legions that could be said to be of one body, it was the Death Guard. As a consequence, the Death Guard were organized into fewer companies than any of the other First Founding Legions. There were never more than seven companies at any time in its history, but each was of considerably greater size, and heavy with Space Marine infantry, including Terminator squads.

With Mortarion elevated to daemonhood, his hand upon the Legion became more remote and the Death Guard became broken up through space and time into smaller units. Warriors of the Death Guard are most often seen afoot, or at best accompanied by mad, plague-infested Dreadnoughts. Few of the tanks and transports of the Legion still function, their upkeep and maintenance being no priority to Space Marines dedicated to the Incarnation of Rot and Decay. Some such constructs do soldier on, possessed by minor daemonic entities or infested and animated by Nurgling hordes, the swarming worker drones of the Lord of the Unclean. These forces are often found organized in squads of seven banded together into cohorts of seven squads. An echo of their Legion's organizational model at its height, seven is also the sacred number of the Death Guard's patron power, and they believe that by forming themselves in multiples of that number, they carry the favor of the daemon lord Nurgle and create a kabalistic strength. Whether their 'Rule of Seven' draws the attention and sorcerous blessing of the Death Guard's deity or not, the manner in which the Plague Marines carry themselves to war still reflects the hand of the Primarch which forged them, shaped them, then led them to their damnation. The daemon prince Mortarion remains master of the Death Guard even after their fall, orchestrating their movements unseen from his bubonic throne.

CAPTAIN GARRO, HERO OF THE DEATH GUARD

When Horus's rebellion was finally understood, seventy Space Marines, alone of five Legions, remained steadfast in their loyalty to the Emperor. These men seized the Imperial cruiser Eisenstein and broke the Traitors' blockade of the Istvaan system to carry word of the treachery to Terra. Their warning may have saved the Imperium. Commanding the Death Guard contingent was a great battle-captain, Garro.

There are conflicting testimonies regarding the fate of Captain Garro and his men. There are those who say that in the turmoil accompanying Horus's assault on the Imperial Palace no one knew what to do with the handful of loyal Marines whose entire Legions had turned traitor. The captain, indeed all of the Eisenstein seventy who survived the gauntlet to reach Terra, were placed in custody pending deposition by the Emperor himself, a deposition which, after his fall and enshrinement in the Golden Throne, never came. Garro and the other 'Heroes of the Imperium' never saw the light of day and died prisoners. Others maintain that Garro himself fought in the palace defense, and when he saw what his brother Legionnaires had become, he renounced arms and served devotedly at the Master Apothecariate, where Space Marine Apothecaries receive their training, futilely seeking a cure for the plague which had taken his entire Legion of brothers, until his own death.

More fanciful taletellers link Garro and his band to secret societies moving behind the public face of the Imperium, and claim that Garro and his original Space Marines still live, an elite force committed to thwarting the aims of Nurgle, Mortarion and the Death Guard, who appear in battle clad in the colors and flying the banners of the pre Heresy Death Guard, then vanish, like grey ghosts from the warp.

Still others report that Garro was unable to resist the same lure to damnation which claimed his Primarch. In the aftermath of the Heresy, Garro turned to Nurgle and became a champion of the Death Guard. As the Lord of Flies, he still leads Plague fleets from the Eye, clad in black iridescent armor and a power claw like a great skeletal hand, accompanied by the maddening buzz of insectoid wings.

Beliefs

The beliefs of the Death Guard echoed those of Mortarion, beginning as one thing and ending as the corrupt opposite. A resolute determination that individuals should be free of oppression and terror became a conviction that individuals were not suited to decide what was just for them. A faith in inner strength, iron will and unshakable resolution in the face of hardship led to pride, arrogance and an utter contempt for those they deemed inferior.

When Nurgle's Rot came to the stranded Death Guard, their pride and arrogance was revealed, and their contempt for weakness turned upon themselves. Their surrender to Nurgle left them with only one seething, burning outlet, stoked white-hot by the depth of their self-loathing: to infect the strong, slay the weak and rot the foundations of everything in their paths until it collapses. Their debasement would no longer seem so shameful, if

the pestilence of their Unclean Lord eventually brought everything to ruin.

Gene-seed

The Space Marines of the Death Guard always reflected the gaunt, shadow-eyed, quality of their Primarch, that gave the lie to the hardiness with which they were made. The contagion which led to their damnation corrupted them physically, as well. As Plague Marines, the once-gaunt Death Guard are now bloated and seeping like an infected abscess, covered in boils, sores and weeping wounds crusted with the brown and green filth of the unclean. Nurgle does not accompany this repulsive aspect with gifts of mutation as freely as other powers (such capricious change is the province of his antithesis, Tzeentch), but on occasion will alter the countenance of a Death Guard aspirant with a tentacle, facet-eyed head of an insect or some other hideously repulsive form.

Battlecry

The Death Guard have no rallying cry as such. As Plague Marines, they are the incarnation of silent death, the virulent epidemic, the wasting disease and the remorselessness of decay. They are pestilence and pox, famine and blight, contagion and cancer, and like all of these things, are most terrifying when they come without word or warning.

USING A DEATH GUARD ARMY IN WARHAMMER 40,000

The Death Guard use the following units from Codex Chaos Space Marines:

HQ	0-1 Chaos Lord or Daemon Prince, Sorcerer, Great Unclean One.
Elites	Plague Marine Cult Terminators, Plague Marines, Possessed Chaos Space Marines.
Troops	Plague Marines, Nurglings, Plaguebearers.
Fast Attack	Daemonic cavalry (Plaguebearers on Beasts of Nurgle.)
Heavy Support	Plague Marine Havocs, Chaos Dreadnoughts, Chaos Predators, Chaos Land Raiders.

A Death Guard army is chosen using the lists in Codex Chaos Space Marines with the following exceptions and special rules. This represents a force drawn entirely from the Death Guard Legion.

The Chaos Lord of a Death Guard army may only have a retinue of Plague Marines, unless he is wearing Terminator armor in which case he may have a retinue of Plague Marine Terminators.

Special Rules

• Plague Marine Cult Terminators cost 46 points for a basic Terminator with twin bolter and power weapon and have +1 Toughness. They may select any of the usual Chaos Terminator weapon upgrades at the normal cost. As with all Cult Terminators they are fearless and will never fall back and cannot be pinned. They are assumed to automatically pass any Morale check. If a Death Guard Chaos Lord is in Terminator armor and is accompanied by a retinue of Death Guard Cult Terminators, then the number of the retinue may be from four to nine models instead of the usual five to nine. If the retinue, including the Chaos Lord, is only five models strong then it may be mounted in a Chaos Land Raider.

• Plague Marine Havoc squads are the Death Guard's version of conventional Havoc squads. Ever since the Heresy, the Death Guard have shown little regard for heavy weaponry and this attitude is reflected in their Havoc Squads.

Death Guard Havocs are exactly the same as normal Plague Marine squads except that, instead of being allowed a single model with plasma gun, flamer, melta gun or plasma pistol, they may have up to three Plague Marines each armed with either a plasma gun at +15 pts or a meltagun at +12 pts. The remainder will have bolters. All carry plague knives. All other options are the same as those available to normal Plague Marine squads.

• Seven is the sacred number of Nurgle. Any squad of Plague Marines (including Terminators, retinues and Havocs) that numbers exactly seven models (including the Lord if a retinue) may upgrade one of its members to an Aspiring Champion at no points cost.

• For Possessed Chaos Space Marines in a Death Guard army, their first roll on the Possessed table is always assumed to be 2 (Fearsome) as they are wracked with pestilence and corruption.

• All Independent characters must take the Mark of Nurgle. Death Guard Chaos Lords and Sorcerers are Fearless so will never fall back and cannot be pinned. They are assumed to automatically pass any Morale check they are required to take. Aspiring Champions may take the Mark of Nurgle and cannot take any other Mark. The only gifts and vehicle gifts that can be chosen are those associated with Nurgle (the one exception is Daemonic Possession, which can be used as normal).

Clarifications

1. Plague Marine Aspiring Champions who take the Mark of Nurgle do not gain a further +1 Toughness as this would in theory take them to Toughness 6 which is the preserve of monstrous creatures. They receive no benefit from taking the Mark of Nurgle other than the ability to take Chaos gifts requiring the Mark of Nurgle. Similarly models bearing the Mark of Nurgle who take the Chaos Space Marine Bike wargear item never increase their Toughness beyond 5. In all cases models always use their original Toughness of 4 for instant death purposes.

2. A Beast of Nurgle occupies a single space in a transport vehicle as a Plague Marine would.

'EAVY METAL SHOWCASE

This month 'Eavy Metal brings you a selection of Warhammer 40,000 Chaos miniatures. Neil Hodgson's disturbing Death Guard models are a fitting accompaniment to the Index Astartes article also in this issue.

Death Guard Lord in Terminator armor, by Neil Hodgson

Death Guard Sorcerer, by Neil Hodgson

Death Guard Lord, by Neil Hodgson

Death Guard Terminators, by Neil Hodgson

Death Guard Dreadnought, by Neil Hodgson

Index Astartes
First Founding

An in-depth look at the First Founding Legions of the Adeptus Astartes

MASTERS OF FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

The Thousand Sons Space Marine Legion

by Christopher Allen, Jonathan Westmoreland and Andy Hoare

The Thousand Sons were born of Magnus, the changeling Primarch. A physical giant possessed of coppery skin, fiery red hair and a single, baleful eye. Some say his massive size reflected his enormous intellect; his cyclopean eye his single-minded strength of purpose. At the height of the Great Crusade, Magnus was amongst the most imposing of the Primarchs and was always the one most suspected of taint. He would endure the whispers of Chaos throughout his life...

Origins

When the Primarchs were mysteriously scattered from their incubation on Terra, the infant Magnus fell upon the remote colony world of Prospero. He could hardly have been more fortunate: a grotesque cyclopean mutant who might have been feared and shunned on any other world came instead upon a hidden planet of kindred spirits: a commune of outcast human psykers. It would not be the last time Magnus's destiny would be so conveniently manipulated.

The original settlers of Prospero had chosen the world for its remoteness from Terra and had gone to great lengths to sever contact with Humanity. Their single citadel was situated deep in the planet's ventral mountain range. Nourished by vast underground hydroponics for sustenance and techno-psychic collector arrays for sustainable energy, it was a construct of extraordinary beauty. The so-called 'City of Light' glittered amidst the desolation of Prospero, all gleaming silver towers, soaring obelisks and majestic pyramids. Within this carefully-artificed reclusium, far from the sight of Man, its commune of human refugees devoted themselves completely to the pursuit of knowledge and the mastery of the nascent mutation which had set them apart: their developing psychic powers.

Legend tells of Magnus arriving like a portentous comet, streaking through the thin atmosphere of Prospero and coming to rest in the central plaza of the city. The vulnerability of their sanctuary to approach from above was something the adepts of Prospero failed to recognize: a failure for which they would suffer greatly in times to come.

Magnus became a ward of the scholars of the commune. Perhaps they recognized their kinship in a mutant cast out among mutants. Perhaps they recognized his potential. What is known is how quickly the young Primarch himself began to manifest the sort of powers which had caused his mentors to flee into isolation; and how utterly he brought those powers under his control. Magnus mastered every psychic discipline, quickly surpassing the abilities of the greatest adepts in the commune. By the time he approached physical maturity, Magnus had grown into a giant in the psychic and intellectual, as well as the physical, sense. Then came the day that Magnus opened his cyclopean eye upon the Empyrean, and instead of channeling power from the Warp, Magnus instead saw into it, and life on Prospero was changed forever.

The instant his single enormous eye saw into that place of power, Magnus the Red went from student to absolute master.

The Warp is no more a lifeless place than the physical world, and the arrival of so prodigious a psychic presence as Magnus did not go unnoticed. More than one consciousness sensed the new life across the Immaterium and more than one recognized him for who he was.

More than one came to find him.

The Apocrypha of Skaros records the day the Emperor and his host arrived upon Prospero.

'It was as though they were friends of old; of many years acquaintance. Magnus's mutant visage disturbed not the Emperor of Man, who embraced his lost Primarch and proclaimed him his own.'

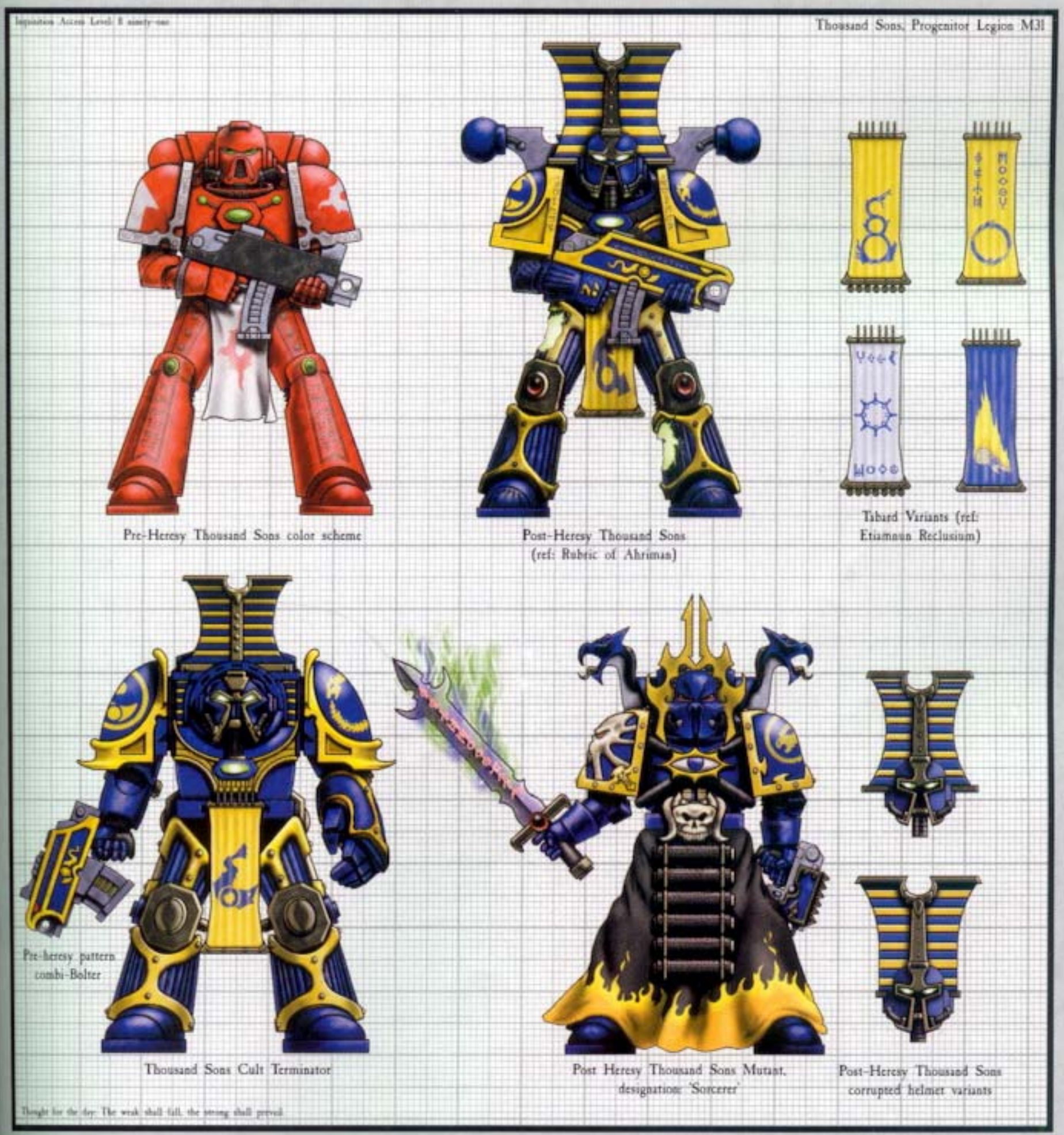
It has been suggested that the face-to-face meeting of Emperor and Primarch was a virtual afterthought, their minds having long since found each other across the Warp.

The Emperor had chosen as his vanguard force for the expedition his fifteenth Legion, the Space Marine progeny infused with Magnus's own gene-seed. The Apocrypha records the moment Primarch and Legion were united.

'The Warp-lost Primarch heard his Emperor and spoke but a simple

response, "As I am your son, they shall become mine." Then he knelt and in that moment accepted Primacy of the fifteenth Legion: his Thousand Sons.'

The discovery of their lost master could not have come sooner for the Thousand Sons. Formed from Magnus's own gene-seed, the Legion was disposed toward psychic mutancy in disproportionate numbers; a circumstance the fledgling Imperium was ill equipped to handle. Deep factionalism divided those who recognized the benefit of stable mutations such as the so-called 'Navigator Gene' of the Navis Nobilite. The Navigator Houses' 'third eye' allowed them to steer a course through the Immaterium making warp travel possible, but some perceived the increasing and seemingly random nature of human mutation as a destructive internal threat. An entire Legion of potential mutants was seen as a dangerous development. The fifteenth Legion had suffered terribly from the spontaneous, uncontrolled manifestation of psychics amongst their ranks, and those who survived to receive training became amongst the most powerful librarians of the epoch. Many more did not. Moreover, the increasingly vocal anti-mutant 'witch hunting' crusades within the Imperium had seized upon the out-of-control Legion as evidence of the danger of psychic mutation. Cries that demanded purging the Imperium of psykers completely were not uncommon, and those directed at the remote and superhuman Space Marines of the Thousand Sons were among the most strident. Magnus came just in time to save the Legion from the threat of destruction.



Relocating its entire depleted strength to Prospero, Magnus turned the might of his intellect to their instruction in the ways of the psyker.

There are scholars, especially among the Librarians of certain Space Marine Chapters, who suggest it was during this time that another threshold was crossed. They believe that the crisis of controlling an entire Legion's destructive psychic mutancy caused Magnus to seek shortcuts, or explore more perilous paths. There are others, including prominent members of the Inquisition, who suggest no such 'threshold' ever existed; that the original commune of psychic adepts were already students of darker arts before Magnus came amongst them. Thus his initiation into similar rites was inevitable. Still others postulate it was the magnitude of the Primarch's own insatiable hunger for knowledge that made what followed inevitable. When it happened will never be known, but at some point, Magnus the Red and his Thousand Sons Legion pursued knowledge beyond scholarship and psychic discipline, and began to practice sorcery.

The difference was not universally noticed at first. Magnus joined the Great Crusade with vigour. He led the Thousand Sons alongside the Emperor, the other rediscovered Primarchs with their Legions and all the fighting forces of Man. They fought in a grand campaign radiating outward from Terra, liberating colonies long isolated and claiming new worlds for the glory of the Emperor. That the Thousand Sons accomplished their victories through guile and deception as often as by strength of arms did not initially draw concern. Victory was victory after all. However, the further the Emperor's realm expanded, the more tenacious grew the opposition. Increasingly, Legions of Space Marines or regiments of Imperial Guard would make planetfall expecting to find lost colonies of men, only to discover the thralls of mysterious powers utterly inimical to them. These slave cults resisted with sorcerous powers granted them by daemonic beings from across the Warp, powers few could fail to notice were akin to those wielded by the Thousand Sons of Magnus. There were those amongst the Imperial court suspicious of the Thousand Sons' methods. Paramount amongst them was Mortarion, sepulchral lord of the Death Guard who knew too well from his own dark past that sorcerous power never came without a price. Leman Russ, Primarch of the Space Wolves, for whom any battle fought through sleight of hand and clever deceit was by definition dishonorable also lent his voice to the critics of the Thousand Sons. The schism grew so great that it threatened the very foundations of the new order, and so the Emperor of Man himself decreed a council to resolve the issue for all time. The mightiest proponents of both sides convened on the planet Nikaea to debate, with the Emperor himself enthroned above the dais as arbiter, in an ancient amphitheater that seated

tens of thousands. There, beneath the glittering starlight, the witch hunters presented their case. They recited a litany of human misery inflicted upon the Emperor's own subjects by sorcerers enslaved by Chaotic monstrosities; of mutants unable to control what they had become, and despots who turned their psychic gifts to dark and selfish purpose. To speak against these charges came Magnus himself. He climbed the dais in silence, his own visage seeming to confirm everything the witch hunters asserted. But when he began to speak, it was clear none of his accusers could match the charisma or presence of a Space Marines Primarch and least of all this particular Primarch's certainty of conviction. Magnus told the assembled throng that no knowledge was tainted of itself, and no pursuit of knowledge ever wrong so long as the seeker of that truth was master of what he learned. And, Magnus decreed with finality, there were no secrets the Thousand Sons had not mastered, no ways too labyrinthine for them to know. When he stepped from the dais, the council was divided more sharply than ever: the witch hunters had made their case collectively with great impact, but with insufficient power to blunt the persuasiveness of the Primarch of the Thousand Sons. The assemblage openly wondered if even the Emperor could decide against one of his own sons.

The tension had reached the palpable knife-edge of violence when a contingent of Space Marine Librarians approached the dais. The Emperor acknowledged them with a nod and all fell silent, for visible amongst the librarians were the chiefs of some of the greatest Legions in the Imperium. These mystic warriors formed a semicircle about the podium to indicate they spoke with one voice, but it was a young Epistolary who stepped forward to deliver their words. Though his identity has been lost to history, he is said to have spoken with a passion that bordered on ferocity, and offered to the assembled council a third alternative. A psyker, he proposed, like an athlete, was a gifted individual whose native talent must be carefully nurtured. Psykers were not evil in themselves. Sorcery was a knowledge that had to be sought, even bargained for, and neither man nor paragon could be certain they had the best of such bargains. The other Librarians united around him, and proposed that the education of human psykers to best serve Mankind be made an Imperial priority. The conduct of sorcery would be outlawed forevermore as an unforgivable heresy against Mankind.

The compromise presented by the Librarians offered both factions something, and appeared to be what the Emperor himself had been waiting for. The Emperor ruled it law without allowing any rebuttal, and the Edicts of Nikaea stand to this millennium as Imperial policy regarding human psychic mutation. But it was not the decision favored by Magnus. The Grimoire Hereticus records the fateful face-to-face confrontation between father and son when the Emperor himself barred Magnus's attempt to storm from the hall in protest. He bade Magnus cease the practice of sorcery and incantation, and the pursuit of all knowledge related to magic. It is said the cyclopean Primarch's face appeared brittle as aged stone as he received his father's command. Brittle enough to crack, but the Primarch of the Thousand Sons bent his shoulder and pledged himself and his Legion to obey. Neither Emperor nor Primarch knew that this moment would be the last time they would meet, and that events had been set in motion that would climax in treachery, bloodshed and pain.

The Betrayal

The threat to the fledgling Imperium resolved by the council served to mask other, darker betrayals already in motion. On Davin, events were reaching their tragic climax as Horus, first among equals, Warmaster and right arm of the Emperor fell victim to the manipulations of Chaos. This threat would not be resolved by debate or decree. Enthralled completely by the dark powers, Horus emerged from the events on Davin intent on nothing less than the complete destruction of the Imperium. Suborning brother Primarchs and their Legions to join his own, Horus intended to take the rest of the Imperium, and indeed the Emperor himself, by complete surprise. He was a brilliant strategist; he believed he had manipulated every possible factor to ensure his success. He had miscalculated in only one regard. Despite the decree of his Father and despite his own sworn promise, Magnus had not turned from the pursuit of the dark arts.

Seeing into the depths of the Warp from his sanctum upon Prospero, Magnus beheld a vision of Horus' pledge of fealty to Chaos upon the fields of the feral world of Davin. Horus' treachery was revealed, every detail made known with total clarity. Magnus saw the too-human foibles of Fulgrim of the Emperor's Children and Angron of the World Eaters played upon masterfully by Horus, and greater forces veiled by the Warp. He saw the terrible trap being laid for Ferrus Manus of the Iron Hands, Vulkan of the Salamanders and cautious Corax of the Raven Guard on Istvaan V. He saw the Emperor's mightiest bastion of unalloyed loyalty, Guilliman's Ultramarines, being cleverly decoyed to the far side of the galaxy, where they could play little part in the drama to unfold. Alone in the entire galaxy, more clearly than even Horus himself, Magnus was given to understand the events at hand. He saw it all and understood each consequence and every role, except his own.

There are generals, tacticians and great military minds who say that had Magnus acted upon his knowledge and taken ship with his Thousand Sons he could have changed the course of the Heresy. Others point out that the Warp is an imprecise place, and Magnus could not be sure he would arrive in time to prevent Horus's treachery. Instead of direct intervention, Magnus embarked upon a more perilous path. The Primarch had never accepted the Emperor's belief in the peril of sorcery, and had broken his oath to turn from the pursuit of such knowledge.

In his precognitive vision of the coming war, and the warning it provided, Magnus was certain he had found proof of the value of his studies. With the combined power of his fellow sorcerers he set about casting a spell across time and space. Breaching all the protective hexes and wards of the Imperial Palace on Terra, he projected his warning of impending revolution into the presence of the Emperor himself, naming Warmaster Horus as its chief architect.

It was to be his moment of triumph and vindication, the occasion of his self-righteous justification. Only the power of Magnus's sorcery had revealed the viper within. Surely the Emperor would at last see its value. Instead, the Emperor named Magnus's sorceries themselves as the viper. He judged Magnus's accusation of his brother Primarch heretical and his blatant

deception evidence of the worst sort of oath breaking. Magnus's pursuit of forbidden knowledge was deemed tragic proof that he had fallen under the sway of the very powers the Emperor had warned him against. The Emperor's worst fears for the soul of his cyclopean son had been realized.

The content of Magnus's warning was ignored completely. It is said the Emperor broke contact with such force that psychic wards throughout the Palace arced with lightning and shattered. At the Emperor's side stood Russ, quaking with barely-contained wrath at Magnus's actions. The Emperor turned to him, for he knew he could be counted upon to prosecute his next orders without restraint. He ordered the Space Wolves to be unleashed upon Magnus and the scholar-soldiers of Prospero.

Only those who witnessed those distant days will ever truly know what happened upon Prospero when the Space Wolves attacked, as extant accounts often contradict each other dramatically. The epic, 'Prospero's Lament', describes a lengthy orbital bombardment by the Space Wolves, followed by a systematic campaign across the planet that took many days and nights, with a death toll of horrific proportions on both sides. On the other hand, one of the Space Wolves' strongest oral accounts of the battle, 'The Edda of the Hammer', asserts the Space Wolves took the Thousand Sons completely by surprise. The Space Wolves fell upon the City of Light from above (as Magnus had, so many years before) and reduced it in one terrible, bloody night of violence and carnage. The single night of burning libraries, crashing towers and feral mayhem is a potent image and the action described in the Edda matches the popular image of the Space Wolves. But the Edda is oft-criticized; for how could a planet of sorcerers, able to see across time and space and into the future, be so completely surprised as to face destruction in the course of a single night? How indeed, unless the dark powers which granted them their visions did not mean for them to see? However it occurred, the sack of Prospero was the ultimate horror for the scholarly Thousand Sons, as Russ and his Space Wolves smashed their way through the sanctuary of the City of Light. Russ's warriors built pyres from Magnus's libraries of books, parchments and ancient texts, destroying artifacts unique in all the galaxy with a stroke of the chainsword. Though they differ in their specifics, most accounts suggest Magnus himself met Leman Russ in hand-to-hand combat, Primarch against Primarch, berserker against giant in the ruined heart of the City. 'The War of the Giants', committed to print by Inquisitor Bastalek Grim from Space Wolf oral tradition, describes the titanic duel that followed:

'Magnus the Red did take to the field of battle, causing the ravaged ground to liquefy 'neath his mighty stride. Russ charged bodily the crimson behemoth and did lift the Cyclops off the ground, The Wolf-King broke the back of the Cyclops, and the last Thousand Sons, seeing their Primarch broken and cast down, did turn and flee. But as Russ raised Frostblade Mjalnar to deliver the killing blow, Magnus spoke a word of power, and did sink away into the iridescent ground.'

In accounting what took place at the last, claims of what occurred on Prospero's final night contradict wildly. Somehow, in the City of Light's dying moments, Magnus cheated Russ of total victory, and in so doing, paid the very price the Emperor had warned him against all along.

Everything that mattered to him was burning to the ground, and Magnus turned to what he knew best to save it. Magnus was swept upon the currents of the Warp, and there he found the knowledge he sought. His sorcerers, his beloved Legion, all the precious knowledge they had accumulated within the silver spires of the City of Light could still be saved. He discovered the solution looking back at him, as if it had always been there,

THE SACKING OF THE ETIAMNUN RECLUSIUM

The Thousand Sons will often employ guile and trickery where other Legions would engage the enemy head-on. These tactics were illustrated when Mordant Hex, a Sorcerer Lord of the Thousand Sons led a raid on a distant world in the Eastern Fringe called Etiamnun III. This airless, barren planet was home to a small community of hermits who for millennia had lived out a simple life of contemplation and study.

This peace was to be shattered forever when the Thousand Sons' drop ships fell from the skies above the mountain retreat. Recovered fragments of the facility's security vid-log record the scene as soon after the landings the passes were filled with relentlessly advancing armored warriors. Records indicate that the hermits' reaction to the attack was one of calm acceptance. As the Space Marines filed up the mountain paths to the gate of the hermitage, its occupants showed no signs of the panic one would expect faced with a Chaos attack.

A brightly robed and armored figure reached the great adamantium doors of the monastery and stood before them for several minutes before striking upon them nine times. A party of beguiled monks had gathered in the air-lock, and at the ninth stroke they activated the depressurization ritual. The air-lock camera clearly shows the looks of serenity upon the faces of the occupants as the atmosphere rapidly bleeds from the chamber. The camera shows the monks' noble struggle to stand as their oxygen supply is cut off. Then the great doors part and for a single second the old men stand open to the airless expanse with the silhouette of the armored warriors visible beyond. An instant later the hermits' legs give way and they are swept from the chamber by the last venting gases, to be dashed upon the statuesque warriors' armored forms.

The remainder of the assault was little more than a massacre. The Thousand Sons gained entry to the reclusium and gunned down any who stood before them. Little or no resistance was offered.

Hex and his force penetrated deep into the mountain complex, and at its heart found what they had come for. The central chamber housed a long forgotten entrance to the Eldar webway: whether this portal had been forgotten by the Eldar, or had been cut off from their main routes is unknown. What can only be guessed at is the potential for damage now a Thousand Sons Sorcerer Lord has gained entrance to the secret paths of the Eldar.

watching his way, and subtly changing him to its own purpose. He beheld sorcery incarnate, promising knowledge, power and salvation. But this time it was on its own terms. Magnus was no longer the master of the way as he had believed himself, but servant to it. It is said that even then Magnus hesitated, but as he thought back to his city, his works, his knowledge and his brethren, reduced to fiery ruin at the command of his own father, he changed his allegiance for all time.

And in that instant, the City of Light, its silver towers and vast libraries and its Legion of Thousand Sons vanished from the face of Prospero, and the Imperium, forever. When Magnus and his Thousand Sons were seen again, it was above Istvaan V, fighting alongside Horus. Magnus had become a Daemon Prince of the Chaos god Tzeentch, Lord of Sorcery, and Changer of the Ways. The battle for their souls and their fate now so complete, it leaves one wondering whether it was ever truly in doubt.

The Rubric of Ahriman

The Thousand Sons had nearly been destroyed by the threat of uncontrolled mutation in their earliest days before their reunion with their Primarch. Even the salvation presented by Magnus's instruction was imperfect, requiring constant and vigilant oversight. The terror of it never left some of the Legion's most veteran members, and the rampant corruption they beheld amongst other Traitor Legions as the Heresy ran its course appalled them. They dedicated themselves exclusively to their new master, and for a time Tzeentch seemed to shield them from a similar fate. Even when the Heresy ultimately failed, and the Thousand Sons were forced to fall back to the Eye of Terror with their comrades in rebellion, Tzeentch's favor seemed unilateral. Their patron god provided a new planet, rich in magical power for them, a haven from the madness within the Eye for them to continue their research. But the way of the Master of Sorcery is capricious, and no sooner were the Thousand Sons ensconced upon their new home world than the Changer of the Ways began to alter them. Grotesque mutations in images favored by Tzeentch appeared spontaneously throughout the Legion. Many embraced these manifestations as tokens of their new destiny, but to the senior members of the Legion it was as if all they had been through counted for nothing. All their sacrifices; the loss of Prospero, the bloodshed of the Heresy, all was rendered meaningless. Their valiant pursuit of knowledge had resulted in the very madness and abomination they had always feared.

An inner cabal of the mightiest sorcerers, led by their Chief Librarian and Magnus's most trusted advisor, Ahriman, determined to counter the warping corruption. They laid the foundations of a mighty spell, and protected their workings with wards of secrecy, for they doubted Magnus would bless so risky an enterprise. They would dispel the violent mutations washing over their battle brothers and render the Thousand Sons immune to the warping effects of Chaos. The Grimoire Hereticus describes a spell of such unimaginable power that even daemonic horrors fled before the singular roaring maelstrom of magic unleashed by Ahriman and his cabal. The Planet of Sorcerers was enveloped in impenetrable storms of blue and yellow lightning, forks of the titanic energy arcing across the planet to strike down corrupted Thousand Sons one after another until it is said Magnus himself was forced to intervene.

The aftermath was nothing like what the cabal had hoped for. Across the breadth of the world, the fighting strength of the Thousand Sons Legion had in a single stroke been destroyed utterly – and preserved for eternity. The reviled mutations were no more, because the flesh of the affected Space Marines had been reduced to dust, sealed forever inside armor mystically welded shut. Every clasp, joint and seam had been sealed as though by infernal fire, trapping the animate spirit of the Thousand Sons irrecoverably within. Virtually the entirety of Magnus's Legion had been transformed into little more than implacable automata for all time. Magnus was enraged. The Legion he had sacrificed everything for was no more. The pursuit of knowledge that had always been foremost to each of his brethren was now denied them for all time. By their own hand, the majority of this Legion of scholars could no longer even think.

Everything he had done, all he had sacrificed, every critical decision he had made in his life had been founded upon two sacred beliefs: that knowledge was pure, and that he was its master. With his home world

AHRIMAN, CHIEF LIBRARIAN OF THE THOUSAND SONS

The transmuting spell which rendered the Thousand Sons a Legion of closed armored automata was the construct of the Legion's greatest sorcerer after Magnus himself: its Chief Librarian, Ahriman. Before the events of the Heresy, Ahriman had shared his Primarch's obsession with arcane mysteries, and had come to be keeper of the now mythical 'Book of Magnus', a tome of incalculable sorcerous power. It may have been knowledge gleaned from that very tome with which Ahriman conjured his now infamous master spell.

The result of his Rubric, while imperfect, is said to have satisfied Ahriman in its consequence. A veteran Thousand Son from before the coming of Magnus, Ahriman's revulsion at the corruption of the Legion was so great that even the terrible price of reversing it was not too high. Magnus was not of like mind, however. So great was his wrath when the cabal was discovered that the Primarch threatened to obliterate them utterly, but the very patron who had worked the mutations upon them in the first place was said to have intervened. Who can say what the most enigmatic and capricious of entities intended? In any event, the Daemon Prince stayed his hand, instead banishing Ahriman from the Planet of Sorcerers and condemning him to wander the Eye of Terror and beyond in a hopeless quest to understand the Chaos god Tzeentch.

For his part, Ahriman refuses to acknowledge Chaos as his master. Across the ensuing millennia he has become a scourge, raiding ancient museums, librarium, scholaria and reclusia, places of learning, religion and contemplative thought. He seeks to acquire artifacts, data, or even persons he believes can lead him to mastery over the way of the sorcerer. He fosters cults on dozens of worlds at a time, providing cult magi with sorcerous power until such time as they have acquired some antiquarian trinket or satisfied another of Ahriman's demands before turning the wrath of his warband upon them.

It is rumored that Ahriman has of late turned his relentless predation upon the Eldar, determined in his belief that the lost knowledge he seeks can be found in that darkest of halls of enlightenment, the vast repository of arcana referred to in whispers as the Black Library.

destroyed, his father his sworn enemy, and his Legion in ruin, Magnus of the Thousand Sons ascended his tower in despair. Casting his bitter gaze out upon the war-weary and fragile Imperium of Man, Magnus vowed, as Horus had at the height of the Heresy, that he would see the galaxy burn.

Home World

Prospero was chosen by its original settlers for one reason: its remoteness. Isolated from the most common Imperial travel lanes and boasting virtually no independent resources of any value, Prospero had only one redeeming quality: it was a good place to hide. In the end, it was not even that. Today it is a blasted ruin, declared Purgatus by the Inquisition.

Through the millennia of endless raiding since, it has been discerned the City of Light survived its transit through the Immaterium intact. It came to rest within the Eye of Terror, upon a world that has come to be known as the Planet of Sorcerers. That daemonic place is a seething cauldron of magical power, reflected across its breadth in the form of infernal volcanism and tempestuous skies saturated with magical vapor. Towers jut from craggy fists of rock thrust up from plains of lava, twisted and obscene mockeries of the spires and pyramids of learning which were the hallmarks of the City of Light before its fall. Mightiest of them all is the obsidian monolith that is the Tower of the Cyclops, said to be so massive it can be discerned from space with the naked eye. More obscenely, the Tower of the Cyclops looks back, as the pinnacle of the obelisk is a glowing warp eye, through which Magnus watches the paths of the future. The Silver Towers of the City of Light have been transfigured by the sorcerous might of the Thousand Sons into space-faring fortresses in which psyker lords set out from the Planet of Sorcerers to traverse the cosmos, launching vengeful assaults upon the Imperium of Man.

Combat Doctrine

The Thousand Sons were well known for preferring to avoid close combat, instead relying upon their mastery of psychic power and sorcery to carry the day. Guile, feint, confusion and misdirection were their hallmarks; all stratagems better used at range. Many were the occasions a Thousand Sons detachment would accomplish through illusion or trickery what a brother Legion would pay for dearly in blood.

Whatever else it may have changed, the Rubric of Ahriman affected that doctrine very little. The sorcerer lords of the Thousand Sons still use their ghost-brethren as implacable bulwarks of gunfire, around which they construct elaborate plans of guile and misdirection to achieve victory, all driven home with a timely application of potent magic.

Organization

Magnus placed great faith in his subordinates, believing he had taught them well, that their powerful sorceries gave them the necessary tools to function independently of him. Before the Heresy, individual Thousand Sons squads were not led by veteran sergeants but by those who showed the most psychic promise. These 'thrall-wizards' were apprenticed to more experienced sorcerers for their cabalistic training, but at the same time gained experience leading men in small units. While this practice meant it was rare for a Thousand Son who did not possess some measure of psychic talent to become a ranking officer, it also meant those sorcerers who did gain prominence had considerable combat experience. As a result, the Thousand Sons, a numerically small Legion to begin with, rarely took to the field en masse. Instead, they campaigned in smaller detachments under the command of sorcerers who often acted with much more authority independent of their Primarch than the officers of other Legions. This command experience has stood them in good stead as independent leaders of warbands since the Heresy, to the Imperium's considerable and continuing misfortune.

Beliefs

For the Primarch Magnus, knowledge was power. He believed there was no

discipline his intellect could not master, no secret he could not unlock and make serve his purpose. For the Thousand Sons, knowledge was salvation, the means to controlling the psychic legacy of their Primarch's gene. Every book was sacred, every writing worthy of study, every document a resource to be drained. The ultimate knowledge was sorcery, the way to final enlightenment, the key to the universe. Before the Heresy, the Thousand Sons were publicly dogmatic, swearing oaths of loyalty and singing the Imperial hymns. They fought for the expansion of the Emperor's realm with diligence, but as their oath-breaking illustrated, their final loyalty rested not with the Emperor, but with their Primarch. When Magnus's reach for intellectual mastery exceeded his grasp, Tzeentch was waiting for him, and the Space Marines who believed as he did could do nothing but fall with him.

Gene-seed

Magnus was unquestionably the most profoundly mutated of the Emperor's Primarchs, both physically and psychically, and the Legion imprinted with his gene-seed reflected that with a high percentage of Thousand Sons manifesting some level of psychic ability. Early in the Legion's history a small, but significant percentage were prone to physical mutation, but in the wake of falling thrall to Tzeentch that percentage escalated wildly. The Rubric ended that forever for the battle brothers of the Thousand Sons, but the sorcerers who command those armored shells still carry the gene-seed of their Daemon Prince and wear their grotesque mutations proudly as tokens of their mercurial patron's favor.

Battlecry

A ghostly whisper of: "All is Dust!"

USING A THOUSAND SONS ARMY IN WARHAMMER 40,000

The Thousand Sons use the following units from Codex Chaos Space Marines:

HQ	Chaos Lord or Daemon Prince, Lord of Change, Sorcerer.
Elites	Tzeentch Cult Terminators, Possessed Chaos Space Marines.
Troops	Thousand Sons, Tzeentch Daemon pack, Chaos Cultists.
Fast Attack	Tzeentch Daemonic beasts.
Heavy Support	Chaos Predator, Chaos Land Raider, Thousand Sons Dreadnought.

The following rules and Codex changes apply when using a Thousand Sons Chaos Space Marine army. The entire army must be Thousand Sons, not just one or two squads.

The Chaos Lord of a Thousand Sons army may only have a retinue of Thousand Sons, unless he is wearing Terminator armor in which case he may have a retinue of Tzeentch Cult Terminators.

Special Rules

• All Thousand Sons Lords and Sorcerers are Fearless (immune to Morale and pinning checks).

• All Thousand Sons characters must take the Mark of Tzeentch, and this is the only Mark they may bear.

• Thousand Sons Lords must take the Sorcerer Lord upgrade and must purchase the Mark of Tzeentch.

• All Lords, Sorcerers, Daemon Princes and Lords of Change may make use of minor psyker powers in games where both players have agreed to their use. There is no upper limit to the number of minor powers that may be purchased for Daemon Princes and Lords of Change.

• Thousand Sons squads and Tzeentch Cult Terminator squads may upgrade one member to a Thousand Sons Sorcerer for +15 points, or for free if the squad numbers exactly nine models, nine being the sacred number in Tzeentch's magic and ceremonies. He has the same stats as the Chaos Space Marine Sorcerer and is not subject to the All Is Dust and Slow and Purposeful special rules. The upgrade includes a Mark of Tzeentch and further equipment may be taken from the Chaos Armory.

Note that a Tzeentch Cult Terminator upgraded to a Sorcerer retains his Terminator armor, combi-bolter and power weapon.

If the squad forms the retinue of a Thousand Sons Lord then any number of its members may be upgraded to Thousand Sons Sorcerers.

• Any single member of a retinue may be designated an Icon Bearer, even though no Aspiring Champions may be purchased.

• If any Thousand Sons in squads are upgraded to sorcerers, the special rules published in the Chapter Approved compilation allowing Greater Daemons to possess Thousand Sons Space Marines are not used. Use the standard Daemonic Possession rules instead.

• Thousand Sons Dreadnoughts do not roll on the Fire Frenzy chart so long as they take the Daemonic Possession vehicle gift. Thousand Sons Dreadnoughts pay only 25 points for this gift.

• The only vehicle gift allowed to a Thousand Sons vehicle is Coruscating Warp Flame, other than the Thousand Sons Dreadnought, which may also take Daemonic Possession.

• Possessed Chaos Space Marines automatically receive the Demonically Fast ability in addition to two rolls on the Ability chart.